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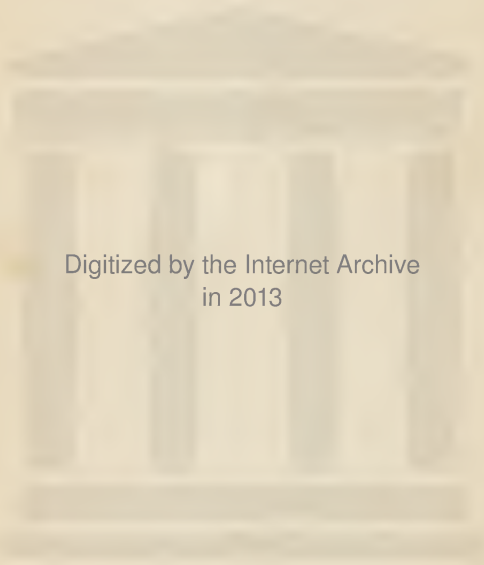
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THE
MYSTERIES AND MISERIES
OF NEW YORK.



THE
MYSTERIES AND MISERIES

OF

NEW YORK:

A STORY OF REAL LIFE.

BY NED BUNTLINE.

DUBLIN:

PUBLISHED BY JAMES M'GLASHAN,
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THE AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

As a general thing, I dislike prefatory remarks, but so singular is the work I have now to write, so strange its scenes and incidents, so various and peculiar the characters which I have to delineate, that I feel bound to tell the reader that strange as all may be, it is drawn from *life*, heart-sickening, *too-real* life. Not one scene of vice or horror is given in the following pages which has not been enacted over and over again in this city, nor is there one character which has not its counterpart in our very midst. I have sought out and studied the reality of each person and scene which I pourtray. Accompanied by several kind and efficient police officers, whom, were it proper, I would gratefully name, I have visited every den of vice which is hereinafter described, and have chosen each character for this work during these visits. Therefore, though this book bears the title of a *novel*, it is written with the ink of truth and deserves the name of a *history* more than that of a *romance*.

I know that this work will offend many persons, for it will strike at vice in every garb and station; the gambling *palaces* of Gotham shall have their place in my chapters, as well as the less fashionable dens of infamy, where the thieves and beggars 'most do congregate.' I write for the good of my fellow-mortals and shall do it with a bold, truthful, fearless hand, aiming to do my *whole duty*, regardless of all consequences. Let the following pages be my test.

THE MYSTERIES OF NEW YORK.

CHAPTER I.

Nor in the olden time when the people differed as much from us in character as in costume, do we commence this story—but now, in modern days, when every man, woman, and child, who reads it, can recognise its characters and descriptions.

On the first day of January, eighteen hundred and forty-one, it rained cold rain and the winds blew strong and gustily in New York, and as the night came on, it grew colder and colder until the falling rain became sleet and the wind freshened into a gale. The day closed thus, and the bright street lamps were lighted. Then could be seen the miserable street-walkers taking their nightly round up and down Broadway; poor, painted, tinsel creatures, now pausing before the large-windowed hotels to show themselves to the cigar-smoking loungers who occupied the big arm-chairs within, then smiling with a faint and sickly smile upon some country-looking promenader, thus throwing out a bait to induce him to turn aside at the next street corner to speak to them, or to make him follow them to the theatre of their nightly infamy. And they shivered as they went along, for some were very thinly dressed; their powdered necks and swelling bosoms were not half covered, and even those who were better dressed, who had muffs and boas and velvet cloaks, felt the piercing wind shrilly whistled through the leafless branches of the Park trees, and blew the sharp sleet into their unveiled faces. Of all the Broadway promenaders at that hour, these miserable females were in number predominant, for few were abroad who were not forced out from NECESSITY, that lawless fiend who asks all and gives nothing.

And even amidst these, as a lily among nettles, or a dove

among vultures, passed one of their own sex who was pure; one yet undarkened with the taint which ever clouds an erring woman's fame. She was a young girl—a glance at her large blue eyes, golden hair and figure, as she passed beneath the lighted lamps, would tell one that she was not over sixteen, but her young face seemed thin with care, her large eyes were sad and mournful in expression. So far as her garb could be seen—it was neat, though of very common material, and she seemed very thinly dressed—although a coarse woollen shawl was wrapped around her, beneath which she carried a large bundle.

Her steps were rapid and she trembled as she hurried along, for she heard rude and uncouth sounds, and she shuddered as she met the depraved beings of her own sex, who stared each man rudely in the face who passed them. And she shrank aside when she saw groups of young men come reeling and laughing along, young men who had just got up from their wine dinners, and the timid one would draw closer the front of her black hood as she saw them rudely stare at her.

And thus had she passed the gauntlet until she reached the vicinity of Park Place, where two huge, parti-coloured lamps, inform the passer-by that 'Florence' is in New York, and she had passed so far free from insult. But here a party of young men, who had just come from a certain *No. three* in the immediate vicinity, where liquor and suppers can be had *gratis* by the *initiated*, saw how timidly she hurried along the outer side of the pavement, and as if by general consent stepped before her so that she could not pass.

'Ha! my little dove, where are you flying to at this time o' night?' cried one of them, while another took the answer upon himself, and replied:

'To her nest to be sure! Don't you want company, my little chick?'

The poor creature trembled and seemed as if she would sink to the earth—she looked around as if to seek aid or see whither to fly, but now they had completely encircled her.

'Please let me go, gentlemen—I am not what you take me for! Oh, do let me hurry home—my poor mother is waiting for me!' murmured she in a supplicating tone.

'Then your mother knows you're out?' cried the first speaker, and while he rudely turned her face so that the lamp-light could shine upon it, he added—'I'll have to see you home, my lady-bird—by Jove, but you're a Venus, only you are a little minus in the filling up—you have to work, I reckon?'

'Oh, yes, sir; but do let me go—I am carrying home work now, and I must not, cannot stay!'

'What, a little sewing girl, eh? The very game I like—go

away, boys, and let me talk to her—I spoke to her first, and by Jupiter, I'm the one to see it out !'

'No—not quite so rapid, if you please,' replied the one who had spoken second—'we'll toss up, Harry, who shall have her !'

'Oh ! Heavens, gentlemen, *do* let me go. I am not what you take me for !' cried the poor creature, and now great tears ran down her blushing cheeks. These were fashionable young *gentlemen*, sons of the 'first families,' and yet they saw those tears—saw her clasp her thin hands in supplication, and felt no pity—stayed not their cruel persecution, and to her last beseeching expression, only replied with a scornful laugh, while he who had been addressed as Harry put his hand in his pocket, and cried to the other :

'Yes, I'll toss up for her, Gus ! Here goes !' and up flew a silver dollar in the air, down came the same with a clear ring upon the sleety pavement, while Gus, who had shouted '*head*' as it went up, bent down to find it.

'*Tail*, by Jove !' he muttered, with a bitter curse, as he raised the dollar and handed it back to the other.

'Then I win ; and here, my girl, is the dollar to commence on !' cried Harry.

The girl did not take the coin—her tears seemed at once to dry on her cheeks, and young as she was, there was a queenly dignity in both tone and manner, as she cried :

'I take no money, sir, but that which I earn by honest labour ! Once more I demand a passage among you. I will go home !'

'Not so fast, my beauty ! You're mine now, I've won a right to you. I shall go home, or somewhere else with you !'

'God protect me !' murmured the girl, then with a kind of desperate firmness in her manner, she pressed forward to try to force her way from amongst the crowd of drunken libertines. But he who had won in the toss-up, clasped her firmly in his arms ; in vain she tried to spring from his grasp. Then she uttered a wild, piercing cry—a shriek of terror and agony. And it was not in vain, for the next moment a tall form stood among the laughing young men ; two or three heavy blows were heard and felt rather than seen, and with each blow one of the party laid down. Before Harry could turn to see who it was that interfered, a large bony hand reached his cheek, and though struck by its open palm, he let go of the poor girl and staggered up against the lamp-post.

'Big Lize, of Thomas Street !' he muttered, as he saw the tall form of the one who had struck him and his companions.

'Yes, I am Big Lize, you lushy swell !' cried the woman, 'and I can maul every sneaking mother's son of ye ! What d'ye mean by stoppin' this ere gal against her will ?'

'It's none of your business ; go look out for yourself, you

thieving catamaran !' cried the young man, recovering somewhat from the stunning effects of the blow, and again springing toward the poor sewing girl, who shrank behind the huge form of her protectress.

'You will have it then, my covey; you're mighty fond of my mawley !' cried Big Lize, as with another blow, she landed him clear down the stairs of the oyster saloon, which was behind him; and then turning to the girl, she cried, 'Cut and run, my darling ! Hays is the word, and off you go ! I'll see that they don't follow you.'

Then, when the poor girl, with one glad expression, 'God bless you !' on her lips, fled up the street, Big Lize turned and again confronted the party, none of whom dared to stir after the girl whom she had rescued. Lize stood and gazed at them a moment, while upon her dissipation marked, but yet firm features, a freezing expression of scorn and contempt settled; then as she turned away and walked up the street, that expression gave way to one of deep sadness, mingled apparently with satisfaction at the act which she had just performed.

'God bless me !' she murmured, repeating the last, grateful words of the poor girl whom she had protected. 'Yes, I have need of such prayers; for God, or man, or the devil, or all together, seem to have cursed me ! Oh God ! I once wore the stamp of innocence on my brow—once I rode along these very streets in my father's carriage, and now'—

'Hallo, old gal, where are you stavin' to? Have you lifted anything to-night ?'

The speaker who thus interrupted Lize in her soliloquy was a short, well-dressed, fine-looking little fellow, with a pair of keen black eyes, and seemed to be a friend well-known to her, for, stretching out her hand, she replied—

'How d'ye, Charley, my chum ! I haven't lifted nuthin' as yet; but I mauled some o' the bigbug swells a bit ago. If you'd been there you might have larnt 'em some lessons in the knucking line ?'

'What, warn't none of the files on the tramp ?'

'Not a mammy's son of 'em !'

'What did you maul the swells for ?'

''Cause they were abusin' a gal—a poor bit of a thing that hasn't got hell's mark on her yet—that's as innocent as I was ten years ago !'

'You might have been in better business, Lize. You're too blasted good-hearted to be on the tramp: but stir your pegs, old gal. I'm agoin' to the crib; see if you can't pick up some cove as wants to see the elephant ?'

Well, tramp along, chummy,' replied the girl; 'I'll see what's what, my chuck !'

And then the girl sighed, when she found herself alone again, and pulled her shawl closer around her. She was a

very singular-looking woman. No doubt many of my readers have seen her as she has passed to and fro on the Broadway-tide : if so, they will recognise this description.

Very tall, nearly or quite six feet in height ; a form well-proportioned ; a carriage rather graceful ; features that once must have been remarkably handsome, and even yet are fine and regular, though the hollow cheek, and high cheek-bones, and narrowing chin, denote the havoc of time and dissipation ; a large, piercing eye of hazel ; lips which now are thin and close, set over white and regular teeth—lips which have firmness written in their expression ; a high brow, upon which crescent-shaped and delicately pencilled eyebrows are seen ; dark hair, even yet soft and glossy, though thinned and shortened. See this—and fancy a touch of paint on either cheek, and a coat of powder on a rather slim neck and broad uncovered shoulders, and ‘ Big Lize, of Thomas Street,’ is before you.

We will leave her to seek a victim for her panel-crib, for she has long been an active panel-thief, while we follow the poor little sewing-girl.

Up Broadway, until she has reached Canal Street ; then down that broad thoroughfare toward the North River she fled, swiftly, though her weak limbs tottered and trembled under her, never pausing, though she was panting and almost breathless, until she reached a street leading diagonally with that down which she hurried. Into this she turned, and soon from it passed into a narrow little alley-way—a filthy, sickening place—along which stretched a row of low, old frame-houses, each looking as if they would crumble and fall down, if they only had room to do so.

Into one of these, or rather its cellar, she stepped, and, as she pushed open the creaking old door, fell forward upon the bare ground, and fainted. Terror and exhaustion had done the work. She lay senseless upon the ground, while the bundle, to which she had clung all this time, rolled out from under her arm.

‘ My poor child—poor Angelina ! what is the matter ? ’ cried a pale, sickly-looking woman, who, when the girl entered, had been seated at the farther corner of the cellar, sewing by the light of a small tallow-dip, which stood on the head of a barrel, the only table visible in the dark, cheerless hole.

But the girl answered not : she lay still, even as if the hand of death was upon her. With trembling haste the mother—for this was indeed that poor girl’s widowed mother—seized the light, and kneeling by her daughter’s side, raised her head on one arm, while she gazed tearfully down upon her face.

‘ No—not dead !—she breathes—she has fainted ! ’ murmured the woman ; and then setting down the candle, she raised the poor girl’s form, and bore it to the little cot-bed

which stood near her work-table. This was the neatest spot in the cellar; for a piece of old rag carpet was placed before it, and the blanket that covered the bed, though thread-bare, was clean. By the rustle that the bed made when the woman laid her daughter upon it, could be discovered its material—straw. Ah, how many in this city have not even *that* to lay down upon!

When she had laid her daughter down, she hurried to where a broken pitcher stood before her 'work-table,' and, returning, commenced bathing the poor girl's face and brow with its contents, and tried to pour some between her lips. The water seemed to have effect, for in a few moments the girl slowly opened her eyes, then with a shudder closed them again, while she slowly passed her hand across them, as if to wipe away the remembrance of some horrible vision.

'It is me, my daughter! Oh, what is the matter! Poor—poor child—you are so weak and so tired!'

'They did not follow! I am safe; but I ran so fast!' murmured the girl faintly; and her thin form shook with the shudder that passed over her frame.

'What do you mean, my poor girl; have you been in danger? Oh God! has harm come to thee, my child?'

The girl raised herself partly up on her elbow. Her eye did not wander now so wildly as before, and she seemed to regain a knowledge of where she was.

'My dear—dear mother!' she cried; and then as she threw her thin arms around the neck of her parent, the poor girl wept—wept for joy that she was now safe. And then, while she yet was sobbing, in broken accents she told her mother of the scene which we have already described—how she had been insulted by things wearing the garb of *men*—how a terrible woman had rushed in and rescued her, and, with strange language but kind looks, bade her go home—and how she had ran all the way, over a mile, amid the pelting blast, and never let go of the bundle which contained work for herself and her mother.

And then, after her tale was told, she shivered and said—

'I am very cold, mother!'

'Yes, poor child, I know you are. Your thin hands feel like marble in my grasp; but you have brought money, we will buy wood and have a fire; and then I know you're hungry, poor thing, you've only eaten one potato to-day!'

'I am not hungry, mother: but I've brought no money!'

'No money, child! Have we worked night and day for a whole week to be disappointed in our pay! Why did they not give it you?'

'They told me to come in the morning, mother; and when I begged them to give it me to-night, they got angry, and spoke so harsh, and said that you could trust them for a

paltry two dollars—and then I took the new bundle of work which was cut out, and came away. We can wait till morning, mother.'

'Yes, and you freezing, starving, dying, my poor child ! Oh God, is not poverty a crime ! Why, why are we cursed with it !'

'Don't fret, dear mother. I'll get within the bed, and when you come too, we'll put our clothes on over the blanket, and we'll soon get warm ; for you will press me to your bosom, and say kind words, as you ever do. That will soon warm my heart. There are others poorer than me !'

'Oh no, child ; it is impossible ! When that candle is burned out, I have not one cent to buy another !'

'But I will go in the morning and get the week's earnings. The two dollars will make us comfortable again ; and then we can make two more, if we work hard.'

'Alas ! my child ; I fear our strength cannot hold out to keep us up during the long, terrible winter. They tell a sad tale of those who lived here last winter, you know !'

'Yes, mother, I have heard them say that they burned up the floor for firewood, and that even then it did not save them, for when morning came after a cold, bitter night at the dead of winter, the parents found their two little children dead. But, mother, they were drunkards, you know, and they cared but little for their poor babies !'

'Too true, my child ; and God cared for the poor creatures by taking them out of a world so cold—so wicked as this. Sometimes I wish that you—you whom I so fondly love, my child—had died ere want and woe came upon us !'

'And then, dear mother, you would have been left to struggle alone. Oh no ! thank God that I have been spared to aid you. But you shiver ; you, too, are cold ; come to bed and sleep till the morrow, and then I will go and get the money, and we will have fire and food. I love to sleep, for I almost always dream of happy days that are past, and sometimes dream of joys that are to come, which makes me glad until I wake.'

We have other scenes to go to, reader. This we will leave for the present.

CHAPTER II.

'CURSE that infernal girl ! I believe she has blackened both of my eyes. She hits harder than Bill Lord ever did ; and he has laid me out twice in the same way, and for about the same thing,' muttered Henry Whitmore, as he 'picked himself up' after Big Lize had 'landed' him at the foot of Florence's steps.

His companions at once gathered around him, and his particular friend, Gustave Livingston, who had *lost* when they tossed up for the possession of the poor sewing girl, now bantered him, crying in a gay tone—

‘You got more than was up in the bill, eh, Harry! I’m glad I didn’t win in the toss-up!’

‘Blast the luck! But where’s the girl?’

‘Big Lize, do you mean?’

‘No—confound it, no! The little beauty—the sewing girl.’

‘Oh, she’s off long ago, and has got Lize to protect her at that. You’re *knocked* out of your chance this time!’ jeered Gustave. And then, as if to make amends for his rather untimely joke, he added, ‘let’s walk up to the bar and enter a plea, boys; I’ve had my fun, and it’s my treat.’

As this was an invitation which fashionable young gentlemen never decline, Florence at once became the price of nine drinks the richer, and the young gentlemen had another tier of grog in their spirit-rooms.

Then Harry, who could not recover his spirits, even though his glass had been filled with some of that B. B. B., the black-bottled-best, proposed that they should take ‘a round.’

‘Where shall we go?’ asked Gustave.

‘Why I’ve had bad luck in at number three—s’pose we try our fortune up at Pat Hisen’s. He does things up in style—keeps the best liquors, and sets the best supper table in town.’

‘You’re right. He’s a gentleman, every inch of him; and besides, his company is very select. You’ll always find more army and navy officers there than anywhere else in town. I heard a right good thing from him about that the other day.’

‘What was it?’ cried all the party.

‘Why, one of the army boys,————, one that distinguished himself and came confounded near getting extinguished out in the Florida war, went in with some friends, and after partaking of a magnificent supper, walked up to Pat to apologise for not going to the faro table to play, saying that he never *gamed*.’

‘Don’t apologize, my dear sir—don’t say a word!’ replied Pat, in that broad, rich tone of his. ‘I’m always glad to see you and your friends here. Even if you don’t play, your presence gives a *tone* to the establishment. I’m glad, I “asshure” you, to see you here.’

‘And, no doubt, he was. Well, Pat is the man for my money, or I for his, to-night!’ cried Harry Whitmore; and ascending to the *parè*, the young men wrapped their cloaks closely around them, and proceeded up Broadway, now stopping to pass some coarse jest with a poor street-walker, then breaking out in some bacchanalian song with a full chorus.

On they staggered up the street, across Canal, passing all until they came to the neighbourhood of the renowned NIBLO's, where, crossing the street, they found themselves at the door of what appeared to be a very genteel private residence. No name was on the door, yet the number—five hundred, and I forget the lesser numbers—was graven on a neat plate.

Harry rang the bell, and it was answered in a moment by a very neatly dressed and genteel servant, who, without a word, admitted the party within the first door; but another was before them, through which they could not pass without the knowledge and consent of the master of the establishment. But they had not long to wait in the corridor—the card of Harry was sent up, and the consequence was a polite invitation to walk up. Up a neatly carpeted stair-case to the second story they passed, where the door was opened into a splendid back parlour. Here they were met by Mr. Hisen *in propria persona*. He had one of those bland, ever-smiling faces which so well becomes a man of the world; an eye at once quick and searching in its glances, and features that would form quite a map of study for a physiognomist.

He was well dressed, yet the flashiness of the sporting man, 'stuck out' a little. There was a very slight mellowness in his voice, as he welcomed the party, which bore a shade of *the brogue* in it, but not enough to make one think him a late importation from the Green Isle of the sea.

'Glad to see you, gentlemen! rather early, but I'm glad to see you, nevertheless! It's coolish out to-night. I was just thinking of brewing a bowl of "the real mountain dew," hot, or if either of you prefer, there's some "1801 brandy" on the side-board; very rare old stuff; been bottled for twelve years to my knowledge; walk up and make yourselves perfectly at home!'

It was remarkable how very fast the neat little gentleman could talk; the words, too, came with a liquid flow from his lips, with a kind of unstudied persuasiveness which made it impossible for those who were present to refuse his invitation.

Therefore, the punch was brewed, we need not add that it was drank, and then cigars were introduced, for as Mr. H. had remarked, it was 'rather early,' too early for a fashionable game, and none but *fashionable* men ever visited that establishment. The room in which they sat was furnished in a neat and tasty style of elegance, two or three very fine landscapes were hung upon the walls, but none of those glaring, lascivious paintings, which in a lower order of gambling hells are always to be seen. The side-boards were well set off with a handsome display of cut glass decanters, &c., which of course were all filled with the choicest wines and liquors; a centre table was covered with the best papers and periodicals of the

day: among which the 'tall Son of York's' excellent 'Spirit,' the old 'Knickerbocker,' 'Albion,' &c., were to be seen. Everything here was rich, neat and tasty. There was a front parlour, too, but we will take a peep into that by-and-by, when the ball commences.

The party smoked and drank; others came in, and time went on until the hour of eleven. Then came a change over the scene. The centre-table was moved aside, a long supper table was set and soon loaded with all that a gourmand could wish for, even with the best which the market could produce. And when the guests were seated—pop! pop! went the champagne corks—the more heavy and serious sherry and Madeira was quietly poured out with its gurgle, gurgle, so like the eddying brooklet, and some, of superior taste to all, saw their glasses filled with the 'London brown S,' its saffron-coloured foam o'ermantling the dark clear essence of the malt beneath.

But even these enjoyments, like all others, were fleeting, the supper was over; midnight was at hand, and it was time for more *fashionable* amusements.

The party arose from the table; the wide folding-doors which separated them from the next room were thrown open, and they entered an apartment furnished full as neatly as the other, but with one article in it which we have not seen before. It is a long table—a rich heavy one of carved and polished mahogany, and upon one end of it are piled heaps of red and white ivory checks, things which are changed for money, used for the same in betting, and are redeemable for cash at the bank—the *faro* bank we mean.

A little silver box stands upon the centre of the table, and in front of this box is arranged a suit of cards, face up, on the table, and within the box is another set similar to them. We forgot to say that behind this box stands a most elegant looking gentleman; a tall, slim, middle-aged gentleman, who smiles as the party enter, and looks as if butter never could melt in his mouth.

And now the party gather in front of the table, while Mr. H. seats himself on the right hand of the dealer to attend to the duties of banker. He opens the little casket which is to contain the evening's *earnings*, or winnings, to call them rightly, and with a *winning* smile, cries,

'Proceed, gentlemen; we are all ready now for a quiet little game. Make your bets.'

And he is obeyed.

'Give me checks for a twenty, Pat!' cries Harry Whitmore, throwing down a bank bill of the XX size.

The round pieces of ivory are in his hand, and then others get their bills changed in a similar way. The dealer shuffles his cards, slips them into his box, and again Pat's rich voice is heard:

‘Make your bets, gentlemen; the board is open.’

Down goes ten dollars of Harry W.’s money on a king; others bet on different cards, and then the dealer slips off the cards, first one to the right, and then one to the left. Ere another is touched the bets are attended to. Those that have lost, see their money raked into the heap before the banker, and the few that win receive their checks. All again make their bets and so on until the deal is out.

Harry Whitmore was in luck, he kept winning until he had more than made up his losses at number *three* Park Place; but others were at that fatal board whom fortune favoured not so much. There was a tall, fine looking young fellow, who had played with great boldness, but with constant loss from the time the bank opened.

‘Who is he?’ asked Gus Livingston of his friend Harry.

‘Not knowing, can’t say,’ replied Harry, but at the same time he propounded the question to a ‘sporting gentleman’ who was apparently only ‘a looker-on in Vienna,’ but who really was a ‘look-out’ in the employ of the bank, who, stationed outside the table as a common spectator, could aid the bank much by timely suggestions to ‘green ’uns,’ and also could see that the betters only took up their winnings.

To Harry’s question in regard to the young man who played so desperately and lost so largely, the ‘look-out’ replied:

‘He is a clerk with S———, the dry goods man, sir?’

‘Is he wealthy?’

‘I don’t know; he makes a pretty fair show. Shall I introduce you?’

‘Yes, by all means. He is a fellow of spirit; I like to see a man play deep!’

‘So do I,’ replied the sporting gentleman, and then he added *sotto voce*: ‘especially when he has charge of the key of his employer’s iron chest!’

Of course, this last remark was not heard, and while the dealer shuffled the pack for a fresh deal, Harry and his party were introduced in due form to Mr. Charles Meadows.

‘You seem to be out of luck to-night, sir!’ said Harry to him, after the usual salutations had passed.

‘Yes, I’ve cursed bad luck. I’ve lost three thousand to-night, and two last night!’

‘You play deep!’

‘Yes; but luck must change you know, it can’t always keep on in this way!’

The gambler who had introduced him heard this remark, and with a low chuckle, said again in an under tone:

‘It’ll last till you drain the old man’s chest, or are found out, my hearty!’ but of course the remark reached not the ears of the young men.

‘The game’s set, gentlemen! Make your bets!’ again was

heard from the dealer, and once more Mr. H. put on one of those inviting smiles.

‘Try your luck once more, Mr. Meadows?’ said he—‘your turn must come soon; Fortune’s wheel is ever revolving?’

‘It’s a devilish long time in getting round to the right point for me,’ replied the young man, and then as he glanced down at the pretty cards which lay upon the table, he added—‘I’ve got just a hundred left, I’ll lay it all on the ace!’

This was done, other bets were made and the deal commenced.

‘Curse the luck!’ cried Meadows, as his ace lost, while his eyes flashed with excitement, ‘I say, Pat, won’t you lend me fifty?’

‘I’m the very worst man in the world to borrow money of, my dear sir, upon my honour, but just step into the back room and tell Duane to give it to you. I’ll endorse your I. O. U.’

The fifty was soon received, and almost as quickly lost. Meadows grew pale when he saw it go, but he tried to smile, and turned away saying:

‘It’s of no use for me to play to-night. ‘I’ll wait till to-morrow evening.’

Then he strode to the side-board, filled a tumbler half full of raw brandy, emptied it at a swallow, after which he bade the party good evening and left the room.

‘Do you know where he boards? By Jove! he is a man of spirit: I must get acquainted with him!’ said Harry Whitmore, addressing himself to the gambler—(we beg his pardon, sporting gentleman, we mean)—who was on the look-out.

‘I don’t know, sir. I only meet him here: you will find him here almost every night. As I said before, he is one of the head clerks of S———, the dry goods merchant; a confidential clerk at that!’

‘S——— don’t know of his coming here, does he?’

‘I should think not, sir; nor do I think Charley Meadows would like S——— to know it. These mercantile men will never let their clerks gamble at cards, though they themselves gamble in the rise and fall of their stock.’

We will leave this party now for a little while, and follow young Meadows from this elegant and *recherche* establishment.

When he reached the door, and felt the cold gale strike his burning forehead, he raised the hat which he had drawn down over his eyes, and as he passed down the now silent street, he muttered:

‘One more night of sin! I am now ten thousand dollars out, and if S——— were to discover it, disgrace and ruin would be mine. Oh, God! this is too bad! I have robbed my employer, stolen from one who has heaped me with

kindnesses, who has enabled me for years to support my poor mother and dear sister. But I will repay it and quit for ever. One lucky night and I can regain all and replace it ! I was lucky at first ; everybody says they play a fair game up there, but it is strange that I can always win on small bets and lose on large ones.'

The young man turned from Broadway down a street not far from Canal, and after walking a short distance, paused at the door of a neat little brick house. As he paused, he heard the iron tongues of the different city bells strike two, and after feeling in his pocket a moment, he muttered again :

'It is too bad, I've lost my night-key somewhere, I shall have to ring and wake the old lady up.'

He touched the knob of the bell-wire, and while the bell was yet tingling, the door was opened.

'What, mother ! are you up yet ?' he asked of a thin, pale, but sweet-looking lady, who might, by her appearance, be forty-five, certainly not more. She was dressed in deep mourning.

'Yes, Charles, Isabella and myself could not sleep when we knew you were at work over your books. What a dreadful night it is out !'

'Yes ; it is bleak and dreary, mother, but you should not have waited for me ; I told you that I had so many accounts to make out, that I couldn't get home early !'

'Poor boy, you have to work so hard ; Mr. S ——— surely will raise your salary this winter. We have hard work to get on and educate Isabella on eight hundred a year.'

'Yes, it is true, mother !' and the young man sighed as he took off his cloak and hat.

Was that sigh caused by the recollection that he had lost thirty one hundred and fifty dollars that very night ?

He followed his mother into the neat but plainly furnished little back parlour, and as he crossed the threshold, his sister arose from her seat beside the centre-table, where she had been reading, and with a glad smile hurried to meet him, and pressed her pure warm lips to his with a kiss such as a *sister* only can give.

Reader, will you pardon a digression. What on all the earth is purer, truer, firmer than a sister's love. She loves as woman ; yet not with passion, not as others love, only when love is returned. Oh, who that has possessed a sister can ever forget her first fond affection ; her warm, holy, passionless kiss. The writer has one, and though years have gone by since fate has separated him from her, never, never can he forget the fond hours of their childhood's love ; though now time and distance and the love of another may have estranged her, yet will the memory of their infant hours bring back to

him, joy, love and gladness, linked with the name of his only sister, IRENE.

And Charles Meadows returned his fond sister's kiss; yes, with lips which had breathed curses but half an hour before, and had opened to the burning draught which he had taken to stifle conscience.

Isabella Meadows was beautiful! Dressed in an evening *neglige*, neat but plain, she looked as pure as an angel. Her eyes were of a dark hazel, so nearly black that by candle-light it would seem they were so. In dark brown curls her hair fell upon a snow white neck, which with its graceful curves would have served Canova for a model; her form was tall, slender, yet perfectly proportioned, and if, as sculptors say, the foot and limbs may be judged by the sight of the hand, her small, delicate, tempered hand, would pronounce hers to be perfection. She seemed to be about sixteen; and each word from her lips, each look and action, showed her to be a child of nature.

We will now leave this scene, but the reader need not fear to lose sight of any scene or character that has been laid before him. We will follow all through their varying life-cruise, and trace each character to its end.

CHAPTER III.

ANOTHER day has passed in our history—a cold, tempestuous day of winter. Oh, what suffering had been felt on that day—how many a starving, dying wretch had felt the keen biting of the frost, with no fire to warm the cold limbs and the colder heart,—no friend to speak the kind word of sympathy—no Christian to tell them that repentance and faith might lead them to a home in another world where the sorrows and ills of this would be all forgotten. Thousands have thus died—men and women who have been nursed in the very hotbeds of infamy and vice, here in this great city, who have never heard the names of our Holy God or of his precious Son, save as they were shouted in oaths and blasphemy. This is not romance, reader—it is but *too* true!

Another day has passed and once more we will look within the cellar of the poor sewing girl and her mother. It is not quite so drear and desolate as when last we left them, for though it is dark and dreary outside, they have a candle upon the old barrel-head, and a little fire in the hearth-place. The two dollars have evidently been received, and they are now more comfortable. But the light of their fire and candle serve only to show how very poor they are. The bare, rough, cracked stone walls, the unfloored earth, two

low stools, the barrel-table, the little cot bedstead, alone are seen.

The mother and daughter are at work, see them with their thin fingers stitching away over the garments for which they are paid so little, the garments which will be worn with pride where the rich and beautiful are assembled. Steadily they work, for time to them is too precious to be wasted—each moment is as a drop of life-blood in their veins.

With a sad smile the mother looks up at her daughter, and she remarks:—

‘We are better off now, dear one, than we were last night !

‘Yes, mother, yet ere the weary week is gone, our scanty store will be finished. If we work night and day, we cannot earn more than two dollars, our rent here is one dollar a week. Oh, it is hard for two, in the cold winter-time, to live upon a dollar; yet, mother, there are others who suffer more than we !’

‘Do not speak of it, child—I would not think so. But daughter, cheer me up with your voice—sing me some song, as you used to do ere we were not so poor as now ?’

‘I will sing for you, mother, but not one of those gay songs, which came from my heart as well as my lips in other and brighter days.’

And then, in a sweet and plaintive tone, the fair girl sang,

THE SEWING GIRL'S SONG.

Wan and weary—sick and cheerless,

By a feeble taper's light,

Sat and sang the never-tearless,

At the dreary dead of night ;

The burden of her lay

Was work, work away,

Thro' the night and the day,

Was work, work away.

We are many in the city

Who the weary needle ply ;

None to aid and few to pity

Tho' we sicken down and die ;

But 'tis work, work away

By night and by day ;

Oh, 'tis work, work away,

We've no time to pray.

Work we ever—pay is scanty,

Scarce enough to gain us bread ;

Starving in the midst of plenty,

Better far we all were dead !

For 'tis work, work away

By night and by day,

Oh, 'tis work, work away,

We've no time to play.

Hearts are breaking—souls are sinking
 'Neath the heavy load they bear,
 Yet live CHRISTIANS never thinking
 What our many sorrows are,
 While we work, work away
 By night and by day,
 While we work, work away
 With scarce time to pray !

The daughter paused, for she heard the sobs of her mother—she saw the big tears gush out from her sunken eyes, like juice from the crushed grape, and her voice trembled, her own eyes filled with tears.

Oh, how much more truth than poetry is there in our little song, reader.

'Oh ! why did you sing that sad, too truthful song, my child ? My heart was heavy before, but now its care-burden is greater, for as a painting brings up a remembrance of its scenes, so do your words bring before me our lonely, miserable condition. Yes, my child ; better far that we were dead than thus to suffer in the very midst of a rich and beautiful city !'

'I will sing another, mother ; it, too, has truth and a moral in it.'

I'll never despair ! I'll never despair !
 My heart shall be light ;
 The glance of my eye shall ever rest where
 The Hope-star is bright.

Oh, I have seen much of trouble and strife,
 I've smiled and I've wept,
 But firmly my course through the ocean of life
 I've still *onward* kept.

I'm ever the same in joy or in sorrow
 In sickness or health,
 Careless to-day how dawneth the morrow,
 In want or in wealth.

I'll never despair, though clouds do o'ercast
 The hopes of my youth,
 But fearless and bold, I'll face the rough blast
 With *honour* and *truth*.

I'll trust to my God and the strength of his power,
 Nor bow to the blast,
 As 'neath the tall oak is shelter'd the flower
 Till the storm be past.

'In Him indeed is our only trust.—His creatures would care little if we did die and starve in their midst !' murmured

the mother, and though her eyes were almost blinded by the tears which *would* come, she stitched away at the warm, comfortable garment which she was making.

And thus with their sad but simple converse worked mother and daughter on, until the midnight hour was past, and then after bending their knees in prayer to the orphan's Father and the widow's Friend, they retired to their straw pallet and clasped in each other's arms slept,—slept from very weariness. That couple had got up with the dawn of light, reader, and what think you they had earned by labouring steadily all the livelong day and evening? Perhaps *tenpence* a piece! This is no fancy of mine—I have seen poor girls, pale, sickly, worn-out things, working day after day, and from their own lips have learned the prices of their labour; and then, to be sure of my proof, have learned from their employers the same truths. And what say these employers in excuse for thus coining their gold from the life-blood of the poor?

Why, they have rivals in business—they must sell *cheap* or not at all—to sell cheap they must get their work for almost nothing, and these poor girls must work or starve, or do even worse, and they must do it at the employer's prices.

Oh, many an unhappy inmate of houses of wretchedness has been driven there by this very extortion of labour; many an inmate of our city prison has been *forced* into crime and depravity, by hunger and cold, and who at the great day of judgment will be answerable for this?

Ye, who living in the lap of luxury, have no care for the suffering around ye!

It was midnight, and still this same second evening in our history, and the hell which we described before, was crowded as usual.

Harry Whitmore, and his shadow, Gus Livingston, was there; and, beside them, before the long faro table stood Charles Meadows, and by the checks in his hand, as well as the excited appearance of his face, it could be seen that once more he was trying his fortune.

Harry was not playing; he was only watching the play of his new friend, who, as on the night before, played a bold, reckless game, and of course a losing one. At each bet his excitement grew greater; and he followed a plan which is sometimes used with success in a *fair* game—that of doubling his bet each time that he lost. At last his losses became so heavy that his double would take every dollar he had with him. He looked for a moment at the pile of five hundred in his hand—paused, sighed, and hesitated—perchance he thought then of his mother and sister, who, for his sake, denied themselves so many little comforts; but as he was seen thus to pause, a gentleman by his side, one whom he knew to be of a

good family—a man, too, in a fine business, and who could, of course, have no interest in the game—remarked—

‘That ten spot has won twice in succession, Mr. Meadows; it will be sure to run through.’

‘Thank you,’ replied the young man; and then he laid down his five hundred dollars on the ten spot; and, strange to say, it *did* win.

‘I’d let it lay,’ whispered his kind adviser, ‘it is sure to run through!’

Charles Meadows did not see that by permitting his bet to win, the dealer had a haul of over a thousand from the bet of a young Englishman on another card; he thought that his luck was changing, and he let his thousand lay upon the board in order to make it two. The next deal saw that thousand quietly drawn over to the banker’s side, and, with a calmness caused alone by desperation, Charles Meadows smiled and said—

‘Broke once more! I am, *indeed*, in luck!’

He saw not the wink that passed between his *gentleman* adviser and the banker. He thought, of course, that all was fair. He was about to turn away, when Harry Whitmore spoke to him.

‘Don’t give up the ship, Mr. Meadows. That last bet was unlucky, but the one before was all right.’

‘I’m broke, sir!’ was the calm answer of the young man.

‘Let me lend you a couple of hundred, and go you halves in your luck, be it good or bad.’

‘By Heaven, you are indeed a friend! I’ll take it, and give my note for it.’

‘Never mind the note: friends, *gentlemen* never require such paltry papers. Your word, sir, is as good as your paper!’ replied the other, at the same time handing him over the two hundred.

At this moment the dealer and the banker bent slightly over towards each other, and, in a low whisper, the latter said:

‘We must play him a little to-night. Let him win about *five*, and he’ll bring a larger pile to-morrow night.’

The dealer answered only with a look of assent, and the next moment the deal began. A wink had been given to the respectable *mercantile* gentleman, and though, as before, he gave his advice to Charles, the latter won upon nearly every bet.

‘Play with small bets, and be sure,’ said he. I wouldn’t advise you to play heavy. Lay it down in five and tens.’

And the fives and tens won, of course. But as his winnings increased, the young man became more and more excited, and wished to bet heavier. At last his pile reached the five hundred. He determined to bet all upon a single card. And

now, with a smile of kindness, even Mr. H., the banker, advised him not to be rash.

'You have lost too much already, Mr. Meadows. Don't bet so rashly; we don't want to win your money,' said he, in his usual quiet and bland way.

'But I want to win my own back: I will lay this down on the Jack!' replied the young man.

'No, not on the Jack, or you would be sure to lose,' said Pat. 'Just wait until the deal is turned without putting down your money, and if that card wins, I'll make you a present of the amount!'

Meadows held back as he was requested, and, sure enough, the Jack did *not* win.

Pat smiled, and congratulated the young man, while the *respectable* adviser remarked, in a tone which could only be heard by the betters:

'What a noble fellow Pat Hisen is! He is the only fair gambler in town. He seems to play for amusement, rather than for gain. He is a thorough-bred gentleman!' And then as he turned to Meadows, he remarked:

'I would advise you not to play any more to-night. You see your luck has changed.'

'What do *you* say, Mr. Whitmore? I feel as if I was playing for you now,' said Charles, addressing himself to his new friend.

'Well, as you have already more than doubled my loan, I think we might as well drop down to Bardotte's or Florence's, and eat a few invigorators, of the "York Bay" or "Saddle Rock" brand, and then go on a *bender*, kick up a row in Leonard Street, or bother the "Charlies" a little.'

'Be it as you will. Here's your money back, and the half of the winnings,' cried young Meadows.

'Never mind that, Charley, my boy. We'll need it to-night; you shall be the purser. Keep it to pay our way with,' replied young Whitmore, carelessly.

And the next moment Gus Livingston took a chance to whisper into the ear of Meadows—

'A capital fellow is Harry! Rich as Croesus, and free as water!'

Reader, while these young men are wending their way to the oyster saloon, we will tell you what the two inseparables are.

Harry Whitmore is a descendant of one of the first families; has had the advantages of education and travel; and is what the world calls a finished gentleman. He rides, dances, shoots, and fences well; speaks several of the modern languages; is skilled in music; and has a very ready flow of conversation. He is withal a 'ladies' man;'—but more, he is a consummate, heartless libertine. He is not rich; for the patrimony

which he inherited from a kind grandfather is now run through, and his only funds come from a fond and too indulgent mother, whose property is so secured, that, during her lifetime, he can have no hold upon it. His father died years ago. He gambles—generally with success, because he links in with the gamblers and helps them. His fine person, plausible manners, and the ‘report’ which he ever keeps up of being still very wealthy, enables him to be a very efficient aid to the “gentlemen with dark continuations.”

Gustave Livingston, his ever present shadow, is one of that genius which is so necessary to a character like Whitmore—a kind of echo—ever ready to drink with him, or fight for him—an ever present umpire ready to turn the scale of dispute in his friend’s favour; ready alike to aid him in cheating or in cajoling a victim.

He, too, is a descendant of a good family. But, alas! for ‘fallen aristocracy,’ he has not only lost their wealth, but their virtues, and he is now emphatically nothing more or less than a genteel *sponge*. There are a goodly number of his class in Gotham.

CHAPTER IV.

THERE is a house in Cherry Street, not far from Catherine Market—a low, frame house, painted yellow—a two-storied dormant-windowed building, which is well known to every police officer in the city, and their visits to it have been frequent.

A little to the north of its door stands an old-time tree; and for many a year it has been known to the ‘crossmen’ and ‘knucks’ of the town as ‘Jack Circle’s watering place’ and ‘fence.’ The dirty red curtains before the windows signify that grog is to be had within; and seldom did it happen, either by day or night, that Harriet, the daughter of Jack, who acted as bar-maid, did not have plenty of occupation in attending to the guests. The house, as I said, is a low, mean looking frame; but, as it runs back, is much larger than it appears.

Jack Circle seldom attended the bar himself, but either moved about among his customers, conversing with them, or absented himself in the back room, where none save himself and a chosen few could enter; for this was a kind of general assembling room for the English burglars and pickpockets, who, driven from their own land, pursued their ‘profession’ in New York. They had another hall, which we soon will describe; but this was a kind of meeting, smoking, and drinking-room. And Jack Circle was their chief—they having

formed themselves into a regular confederacy, agreeing to act only upon the orders of their chief, which were to be given after a consultation with the gang in assembly. And the gang had their regular weekly meetings, when the report of each member was as duly given to the chief, as the reports of the city police are to their worthy head.

On the same evening which dates with the events of our last chapter, there was a very 'select party' in the little dark back room in the second story of old Jack's house, to whom we will introduce you, reader.

First, let Mr. Jack Circle stand before you. He is large, very portly, red-faced, jolly, Toby-Philpot-kind-of-a-looking fellow, and yet a man of immense muscular power. The bulldoggish look about his eyes and mouth—the thick, short neck—the broad round shoulders and full chest, proclaim him to be what he is,—an Englishman of the real St. Giles's order. His age is fifty or a little more, but like the general run of men of his class, that age leaves him just in his prime. He is, and long has been, the chief of the gang to whom we devote this chapter.

His daughter, Harriet, is well known as Tom Walker's wife, to all the crossmen of the town, of whom she has ever been a favourite, judging from the fact that she has now some four or five husbands, for as soon as one of them got jugged and found a temporary home in the State-prison, she would get another, until she is so well supplied, that she generally has one on hand all the time. She was, at the dating of our story, about twenty-five years of age, not ill-looking, though in no way remarkable for extreme beauty. She was, however, tall, well formed, and very powerful, and possessed a great influence over the cracksmen of her clan.

And now for one more of the party—Mr. Bob Sutton. You have, of course, heard of him, reader. He is a perfect hero among burglars; his name has been connected with every daring burglary that has occurred here within twenty years. He is nearly as old as Jack Circle; has a rather open and honest-looking face when not on the cross; is very large and stout. In some rough bout or other, he has had his cut-water staved in—in other words, his nose has been broken in till it is rather flat. Scars are seen like a map of pugilistic history all over his broad countenance. He was once quite a celebrated pugilist in England. He is known generally as 'Bob the Wheeler,' because he was in his younger days brought up to the trade of a wheelwright. He was once sentenced to Sing Sing for life, but was pardoned out, and is now a greater rascal than ever.

Then comes Bill Hoppy. He too has been gazetted so often in our city papers, that his name is as well known as John Smith's. He is rather a good looking fellow of thirty years.

of age, with dark eyes, black curling hair, is 5 feet 9 inches high, ever genteely appparelled, and is as daring a cove as ever cracked a crib, touched a dummy, or palmed a glisten.

Jack Shaw—a tall, burly-looking, but well-formed customer, with a slight cast in his left eye, which makes him ‘look two ways for a Sunday’—is another of our friends. And with ‘Black Bill,’ alias Jack Henderson, makes up the party who, on the evening in question, were assembled in the little up-stairs room. ‘Black Bill’ gets his sobriquet from his black-muzzled, dark and forbidding appearance. He is tall, rough-looking, resembling somewhat an old second-mate, who, broken for some misdemeanour aboard ship, becomes the worst fore-mast hand that ever grumbled at an order, or kicked up a mutiny. He is thirty-five or seven, and to use the words of one who *knows* him, ‘looks the thief all over.’ Nearly all of these fellows are ‘*caffers*’—a slang term applied to the convicts of Botany Bay. In a future place the term, and its origin, will be explained. Mr. Jack Circle has a peculiar right to the title.

The whole of them are English; their language is flash; and they can boast of relatives in Botany Bay, and of others who have reached quite as elevated positions as Mahomet’s coffin.

But to their meeting.

‘Ve are all here, my covies,’ said old Jack, when he glanced around the room, which was lighted by the one side of a regular thief’s lantern; ‘let’s hear wot’s on the lay! Wot ’ave you got to say Bobby, my lucky?’

‘Vy, Cap’n Jack, there’s a crib as I’ve got my peepers on where they will stir their tea with silver spoons, ven we knows that pewter is better for their ’ealths.’

‘Can it be cracked heasy?’

‘Bout as heasy as gettin’ into an old shoe.’

‘Vel, then, crack it, my lucky; but do it up right! Vot ’ave you got to say, Bill?’

‘I knows of a Gospel-shop w’ere they takes in their Sunday dimes on silver plates, and sarves up their goodies on the same sort o’ stuff. Ve might as vel eat off o’ silver onst, jist to see ’ow the vittels ’ud taste!’

‘Right as a trivet, my cove; you is a prig of the old sort! Vot ’ave you got to say, Jack?’

‘Nothin’ more than that!’ and Shaw threw down a bag which seemed by its sound to contain silver, and a goodly amount.

‘Them ere’s the werry answers as I like best!’ cried Harriet ‘Ow much have you lifted, Jack?’

‘A matter of five hundred, or so. I prigged two prancers and sold ’em; ’elped a swell to carry his gold thimble: borried two cloaks for my uncle from “the Astor;” and picked up a dummy for a green ’un, and went ’im ’alves!’

'Oh Jack, times is a gettin' low,' sighed Black Bill.

'Vy; 'ow so? I dosent see but as I've done sumthin' tow'rd payin' the scot this week.'

'But it's been in sich a small way,' replied Bill, with another sigh. 'The time wos when we would'nt touch at nothin' less than cracking a big crib; and now it's enough to break my heart to see a man of your talent and standing forced to prig prancers, knuck tickers, and go on the low sneaks! I'm agoing to quit the profession.'

'Quit!' exclaimed all, in surprise. 'Quit the profession, Bill?'

'Yes; I'm agoin' into a respectable business!'

'Vot is it, Bill—vont you take me in for an active partner?' added Harriet.

'Vot *do* you mean to do, Bill?' said old Jack.

'Why, cap'n, I mean to open a jewelry store.'

'Open a jewelry store, you noddy! cried Harriet, 'ow're you goin' to do that, 'ven you hav'nt got no more stock than a broken down sheney?'

'Why, my duck, I'm agoin' to open it with a jimmy and a dark lantern, to be sure!'

'Ha! ha!' shouted the old man; 'allers at your jokin', my lucky. You're the cove as never died a cryin'. 'Ave you found a bang-up lay?'

'I haint found nothin' else.'

'Vere away is it?'

'In Boston, the coppers there aint half so keen with their peepers as they are here. I went on and borried the amount o' my expenses from a swell that put up at the Tremont. I did it against my will, for I'm above little actions, and I've got no small wices, but I was short of the dust, and had to do it to pay expenses.'

'Ow many of the boys vill it take to crack the jewel shop?'

'Why, I want Jack and Bill Hoppy, and then I want a youngster for a snakesman, one as can get in through a hole in the back winder.'

'When do you want to go on the dub?'

'The sooner the better, as the gal said when her man asked her the day.'

The chief paused a moment, and seemed to be counting up the other engagements in his mind, when three, low, double taps, were heard at the door.

'Its von uv us, Arriet, my gal,' said old Jack, and the woman at once unbarred the door.

The person who entered, was 'Charley Cooper,' the same dapper little fellow, who in our first chapter addressed Big Lize in Broadway.

'Ello, Charley, my kid! tip us your mawley, vot is'nt new

to night?' cried old Jack, reaching out his mawley or hand to the new comer.

'Nothin' much worth pattering about. Lize made a big haul last night; I've brought it over to put in the big bag, and draw our share of the lucky.'

'Ow did she make the raise?'

'Got a big bug home with her, and jist then her 'usband came up stairs, and the swell didn't have no time to count his change afore he got out.'

'Come the panel over him, eh? Was the swell a gold-finch?'

'He was'nt nothin' else. Got a clear ten times ten out of him.'

'Won't he pay a wisit to old Hays?' asked Harriet.

'I reckon not; he had grey hairs on his head, and maybe he wouldn't like to have it known where his breeches were when the dummy was touched.'

'Vel, my kiddies, ve might as vel count up the week's earnins, and divide the lucky,' cried old Jack; 'I'll keep Cupid's share, and 'Tilda's and the rest for 'em till they come; you're a losin' time, as the devil said to the parson ven his congergashun vas asleep.'

And then old Jack bade Harriet trim the glim, and all the spoils for the week were laid out, and the division made.

After this was done, quite an animated discussion occurred, as to what the gang should next do. Henderson was opposed to all small work, and was bent on opening his jewelry store, to which Hoppy assented only on the condition of their helping him first to sack the 'gospel-shop.' Each of the party had some new place upon which the eye had fallen during the week, and the dangers of detection and the prospect of success in each case, was duly discussed; old Jack, from his experience and extensive knowledge, having the loudest say in the party.

At last all was settled, a visiting party of inspection appointed for the Boston lay, and then the party adjourned to the less secret room below, for the purpose of taking a bout at drinking and smoking. Harriet of course was their attendant, while old Jack being through *official* business once again mingled with his outside customers, many of whom were petty thieves, &c., who, though not connected with his gang in any way, used his house as a fencing ken, or place of deposit for their stealings. No one would give a better price than Jack for a set of spoons. No one could smash a fifty or a check better, and as none save thieves visited his house, they were pretty safe there.

Another picture, reader. A young man is seen sitting in a large arm chair, one of that leather-backed easy kind, so fashionable in the better sort of lawyer's offices; before him

is a centre table heaped up with books of all kinds, and printed in nearly all languages. With his heels cocked up on the edge of the table and a fine cigar between his lips, the young man seemed intently engaged in reading a small octavo work, and while he read, ever and anon an approving smile or appreciating remark could be seen and heard, as his eye met pleasing passages.

The room looked like a perfect literary museum, though its contents did not seem to be very classically arranged, for there were large heaps piled upon the floor in every corner, covered with dust; some of them neat, elegantly bound works, others with covers, ancient looking volumes. Maps, pictures, inkstands, writing materials, were scattered all around in rare confusion, intermixed with clothes, domestic utensils, &c., &c. But by far the greatest amount of the contents of the room was in books.

The young man seemed to be eighteen or twenty years of age, was a fine, interesting, scholar-like looking individual, dressed in a plain suit of black, wearing a white neckcloth, and having rather the appearance of a student of divinity. A wide, Byronic collar was thrown back to display a very white and well turned neck; his curling black hair was carelessly brushed back from a high, ample brow; and if we are to judge from the usual descriptions of them, he looked very like a young *poet*.

Reader, this young man, *Frank Hennock*, is now in Sing Sing, serving out his term of punishment for a grand larceny. You will in our romance learn more of him.

He was, as we have said above, seated in his easy chair, in a room filled with the proceeds of his plunder, and he was engaged in reading very attentively the first volume of Bulwer's *Paul Clifford*. He paused, raised his eyes up from the book, and took his feet down from the table, as three low taps were heard at his door, then he still waited until three double taps followed, when he said:

'Tis one of us, it's O K,' and proceeded to unbolt the door.

A rather good-looking female, of twenty-three or five years apparent age, crossed the threshold, to whom he extended his hand, exclaiming:

'Ah, is it thee, my fair Matilda? My heart, like the wilting flower, has longed for the sunlight of thy smiles, and thy presence is as pleasant as it was unlooked for.'

'Oh, blast your humbuggery—talk plain English to me—I'm not used to it. Patter flash, my lucky, you're as used to it as I am.'

'Flash, Matilda! oh horrible, it is vulgar. Byron, Tom Moore, Walter Scott, all favourite authors of mine, never used

it. Why, here is Bulwer : I'm reading his Paul Clifford, and he don't use flash language in a dozen places. In all my collection I've got but one book on the flash, and that's Captain Grose's dictionary. No, it's vulgar, and I won't use it, Matilda.'

'Vulgar or not, it's mighty useful at times.'

'Yes, and I'll use it when it is necessary ; but Matilda, when I am in thy sweet presence I would prefer to address thee in language more refined.'

'Oh, —— sugar, you know what I'm used to, what the deuce do you want to make out as if I was an angel for ?'

'Ah, Matilda, to me you are an angel, a guardian angel, I may say. When I was jugged the last time didn't you play the affectionate sister for me, and bring me all I wanted ?'

'Well, I didn't do no more than I ought to do, Frank ; you'd do as much for me, wouldn't you ?'

'Yes, peerless one, I'd deliberately lay me down and expire for you? Matilda, I love you !'

'Prove it !'

'How shall I ? must I scale the frozen cliffs of snow-capped Orizabo ? Must I fly to the burning shores of ebon Africa, and bring thence the hide of the Nehemian lion ? Must I throw Van Amburg in the shade, and enter boldly in between the jaws of Welch's elephant ? Speak, fair possessor of my heart, speak and I will thy will obey !'

'Oh, blast the thing, Frank, speak like a man of sense ! You're as good a knuck as ever frisked a swell ! Why don't you make a *raise* ?'

'Why, to tell the truth, my love, I'm so much taken up with my literary pursuits, that, on my honour, I've no time to devote to the less elegant, but I acknowledge the more profitable avocation to which you allude. And besides, 'Tilda, I have another objection !'

'What's that ?'

'Why, to tell the truth, my fair friend, I've not got the spunk to make a real large haul. When I hear of the boys making a large lift, I always envy them ; but somehow or other whenever I think of trying at something large, my heart fails me !'

'You're a spooney ; I'll tell you what it is—with such a father and brother as you have, you ought to be ashamed of yourself for doing so little : you've never done a nothin for the honour of your family, when your precious daddy and your brother has both "lifted" themselves into notoriety.'

'Ah, Matilda, now don't speak of them ; they are unfortunate individuals. I can see them now within the dreary walls of Sing-Sing ; yes, I was thinking of them this very morning, for I composed a poem on the subject. I'll read it to you—'

'No, no!' cried the woman, interrupting him; 'I've other fish to fry. We've got business for you!'

'For me, what is it, my love?'

'Why there's a swell up town as has advertised for a private secretary—some kind of a clark, you know—and old Jack has found out from Sheney Bill, the Intelligence Office keeper, all about the old cove. He's rich as thunder, and close as a wolf-trap!'

'Well, what have I to do with that?'

'Why, you've got to git the sitervation! The recommendations are all made out; you've to be the only son of your poor widdered mother, you know, to have 'sperienced religion, and all that. The old cove goes in for all that kind of humbug.'

'Well, what is to come after that?'

'Why, you poor noddy, can't you see! Get everything right; find out where he stows his precious; get the run of the house, and old Jack 'll send some of the boys to help you to take care of him and his money!'

'Oh, 'Tilda, if I do this, I shall be guilty of ingratitude, that monstrous crime which Shakespeare calls—'

'Oh, curse your Shakspeare, and you too. Why don't you attend to your business. Jack has sent for you and you've got to go. Here's the *pape's*'—and the girl handed him the letters of recommendation—'the where he lives is on the back of them, so cut for your lay, or old Jack 'll be down on you with somethin as 'll get you in the jug afore you knows where you is!'

'Well, 'Tilda, if I must, I must. I hope the old covey has got a good library. Ah, 'Tilda, you don't know what you lose by not being acquainted with literary pursuits.' And the young man breathed a commiserating sigh.

'I don't know nothin' about no pursuits, 'cept the nab's persuits, and I'll be blasted if I likes them overly and above common?' replied the girl, and then she turned and left the room.

For a moment Frank looked after her, then striking an attitude, cried:—

'Thou art gone—thou art gone, like the last rose of summer, and left me alone!' Then glancing at the papers which he held in his hand, he changed his voice and attitude into a very good imitation of Charles Kean, and cried:—

'To go or not to go? that is the question! Whether it will be better for me to stop here and read novels or to go and make a raise worthy of the glorious profession followed by Paul Clifford and other heroic men!'

Again he paused, and then striking an attitude imitative of Anderson, continued:

'Yes, I will go. I see a vision before me! Be thou a spirit

of wealth or a goblet damned; bringst with thee airs from Sing-Sing, or thoughts of Blackwell's, I go. Be the intent wicked—its shape questionable, I care not! I cry—go on! I will follow thee—yes, death or glory is my motto—Paul Clifford like, I'll *do* or *die*!

He seemed to have adopted the latter thought, for, after slicking down his hair and arranging his neat, but thread-bare suite of black, before one of his many looking glasses, he departed on his errand, carefully locking the door behind him.

CHAPTER V.

At the close of our fourth chapter, we left three individuals in the street, who were bent upon having, what our fashionable bucks call '*a real bender*,' and now, reader, with or without your consent we will 'see them through.'

First, Charles Meadows, Harry Whitmore, and Gustave Livingston, bent their way to Florence's for a few of the salt-water vegetables, or invigorators, as Harry facetiously termed them.

'Two stews and a raw,' were soon stowed away in their victualling holds, and then fortifying the inner man with a little of the 'B. B. B.,' the party felt prepared for the evening, or rather for the morning, as the old City-hall bell had told *one* sometime previous to the moment which found them standing upon the *pavé* at the corner of Park Place.

The streets were now nearly deserted; the night nymphs had slunk away to their dens; only here and there the ever vigilant 'stars' could be seen on their beats, examining each hole or corner with certain glances, lest some thief or loafer should have made a berth which belonged not unto him. Now and then a person would hurry swiftly by, but he was perchance speeding to the doctor's office to procure aid for some one suffering in the agonies of illness; and then again one would be seen close muffling his face in his cloak, stealing cautiously along, as if he had been guilty of something of which he was ashamed. Perhaps he was slinking home to the arms of an affectionate and waiting wife, and he too coming from the gambling house, or a place of even greater infamy for him.

The young men came up from the fashionable saloon, and as they paused upon the *pavé*, Harry cried:

'Well, fellows, where shall we go? I say, Charley, (excuse the familiarity, but by Jove, I love you like a brother), which way shall we start?'

'I don't care a copper, old boy; it's late now; my mother

and sister have gone to bed, and I'll make a night of it,' replied the young man.

'Have you got a sister? How old is she?' asked Harry quickly.

'Only sixteen; and she's the prettiest girl in York, if I do say it!'

'Prettier than mine, do you think? They say *my* sister is *some* in a crowd!'

'Well, you shall see for yourself, Harry—by Jove, you shall. I'll bet the drinks on her beauty and leave it to yourself after you've seen her.'

'No; I'll take the bet, but you shall see my sister, and then I'll leave it to you to decide,' cried Harry; and had Charles Meadows looked him in the face at that moment by the lamp-light, he might have seen the sly wink which was given to Gus Livingston, to keep up the rig, for Gus knew well that Harry Whitmore was an only child.

Like a good echo or sponge-assistant as he was, he added to his friend's last remark:

'If your sister isn't an angel, Charley, you'll lose the bet. Maria Whitmore isn't a girl that can be matched in every crowd.'

'Well,—we'll see,' replied young Meadows, 'but it's getting late now, and we'd better be on the move.'

'It's getting *early*, you mean; but it is just the fashionable hour for the Leonard Street ladies, they're in full blast there about this hour.'

'When do the poor creatures sleep?' asked Charles.

'Why, in the day, to be sure; how *green* you are,' replied Harry. 'You don't seem to know much about the fashions.'

'I have never mingled with that class, yet,' replied the young man—'until I got into the infernal habit of gambling, I always spent my evenings at home with my mother and Isabella.'

'Isabella! Is that your sister's name?'

'Yes—and my mother's also.'

'And I, because my pure, angelic sister, own's it.'

The eye of Whitmore flashed with pleasure. In a low whisper he said to his echo:

'Gus, this must be something great, eh? Sixteen, pure, *green*, he means. I must see the bird.'

The *echo* only answered with a smile and glance of more than *wordy* meaning,

'Well, where shall it be? At Julia B.'s, 55 Leonard, or some other of hell's paradises,' cried Harry.

'Where you please,' replied Charles; 'as I said before, I am not acquainted with these localities or their mysteries.'

'Then 'tis high time you were initiated; we're the chaps that *can* show you round! eh, Gus?'

'To be sure we are. Why, Harry knows every pretty girl that's out,' replied the echo in answer to this appeal.

'Then to Jule's let it be,' cried Harry, and the young men wrapped their cloaks around them and staggered up the now almost deserted street. They soon reached Leonard street, down this they turned toward the North River. But a little way down and they paused before a large, fine-looking brick-house, up the steps of which they passed and rang the bell. In a moment a little shutter at one side of the door was raised, and a female voice asked :

'Who is there?'

'It's me, Mary. I'm here with two friends of the right sort,' replied Harry.

'Who's *me*?' answered the facetious door-keeper, 'I don't know anybody of that name.'

'Well, you know Harry Whitmore, don't you?'

'Oh, yes, Harry, is that you?' cried the woman.

'To be sure it is, and it's as cold as Norway out here; stir your stumps and let us in, that's a good Molly.'

In a moment the heavy bolts were drawn back, the green-painted iron door swung heavily on its hinges, and the young men were within the most celebrated *palace* of infamy which disgraces Gotham.

As the door closed behind them, they could hear joyous voices within; gay peals of laughter, and the sound of the piano also fell upon their ears. The next instant they were in the large double parlour, where were already quite a number of '*gentlemen*,' some of them grey-haired men, but all having the appearance of being *monied* individuals, for here, as well as in the gambler's hell, no one is wanted, who is not the possessor of all-powerful gold.

There were a dozen or eighteen females, seated on the splendid ottomans around the room, all of them good-looking, some of them very handsome. They were dressed very richly, though in a manner calculated to exhibit the beauty of their forms, even at the expense of modesty. Low-necked dresses revealed even more than bare, powdered shoulders: their arms were unsleeved, and those who had pretty feet, wore skirts sufficiently short to exhibit them. They were curled, and powdered and painted, until art could do no more to add to their looks, and now the poor miserable creatures were on exhibition, as pieces of finery ready for sale.

And they seemed gay; appeared to be happy. They laughed and danced and sang as if their path was strewn with flowers; yet, as beneath a glistening lake in the calm summer-time, a wreck may be hidden, so beneath that outward gaiety many a broken heart lay cold and still: many a wrecked spirit and crushed hope was concealed. They then, amid the glare of lights, the reflection of the crimson velvet

curtains and the gorgeous furniture, looked as if they possessed beauty; but could they have been seen without their paint and ornaments, without the artificial aids around them, pale would then be their now rosy cheeks; sunken their lustreless eyes; gone the smile, and hushed the laugh.

And many of these poor hapless creatures were young—fifteen, sixteen, seventeen years of age—too young, oh Heaven! for that living grave. And how came they there? Let the lawless, heartless, God-forsaken libertines answer, who led some of them away by false promises from the paths of honour—let them reply! Woman—fond, trusting, all-confiding woman, but too often listens to their honeyed words. But there [are yet other causes which led them there. Many a poor girl, possessing nothing save beauty, has toiled and suffered for many a weary winter's day, and for her toil, like our poor sewing girl, has not been able to sustain even the semblance of comfort, or keep her chilled limbs warm. While thus suffering, she has seen the courtesan pass along, robed in silks and furs—at least *dressed* warmly, even richly. And while the thought of her daily toil and her own misery was contrasted with the lot of the other, she has yielded to the voice of the tempter, and fallen into the pit whence no hand amid all our *Christian* city will attempt to raise her. If she had been able to live by her honourable labour, that poor girl would rather have died than have sprung into the dead sea of pollution and infamy.

Reader, excuse us; but this is a book where we must at times break aside from the thread of our story to moralise.—He were worse than thoughtless, who could see and describe the scenes which we have, and not give some reflections thereupon.

When our *trio* entered the splendid parlour, they were met by the beautiful hostess in person.

'Good evening, Harry; I'm glad to see you and Gus. You have a friend, I perceive,' said she, in a bland and musical tone.

'Yes, Jule,' replied Harry 'my very particular friend, Mr. Meadows. He is rather verdant; but you'll find him a glorious fellow, quite "one of us," I assure you.'

'I doubt it not; nature has kindly written his character upon his face.' And the '*lady*' reached out a very white and richly-jeweled hand, while she smiled most sweetly. Then she added:

'I will introduce you to some of my boarders, sir. You will find quite a variety. We have blondes and brunettes. The creole of the South; the lily of the central States; and the snow-drop of the North. Take my arm and walk around with me.'

The young man hesitated a moment; he saw several mer

chants there—men who knew him—and the fear for an instant flashed across his mind, that his employer would hear of this visit. But he thought that, of course, for their own sakes, the *respectable* individuals would keep the secret, and he accepted the arm of Mrs. B., while Harry and Gus seated themselves on a sofa, between a couple of girls, who were already half-tipsy on champagne, and, to use their own language, ‘were as full of fun as an egg could be of meat.’

‘What is the style of beauty which you most admire?’ asked the lady-patroness.

‘Why, really, I know not. I admire all kinds, I believe,’ replied Charles. ‘It would be hard to say, but’—and the young man glanced at his companion as he spoke—‘I think dark, languishing eyes; dark hair; a form full, even a little *embonpoint*; and a complexion at once clear and fair, may be considered beautiful.’

Both her lip and her eye smiled, as his companion saw the drift of his compliment; but without appearing to notice it, she said:

‘Then I must introduce you to a young lady from Baltimore; or really from a city a little beyond.’

Then, as they paused before a very pretty and lady-like looking girl, the hostess added:

‘Mr. Meadows, Miss Kate Hall. You will find Miss Kate a very agreeable companion, sir; but she seems dull to-night; I think a bottle of champagne will be of service to you both.’

‘Order it, of course,’ replied Meadows. And then the interesting young lady moved aside, and left room for him to sit upon the ottoman which she occupied. As he did this, he remarked:

‘You do seem sad this evening, miss; may I ask the reason?’

The young lady sighed, looked down upon the beautiful fan which she flirted in her hand, and in a low, sweet tone, replied:

‘Really, sir—we are strangers, and beside, I am not very sad.’ But, as if to give the lie to her own words, her bosom heaved with even a deeper sigh than before.

Meadows felt interested. The girl really was very pretty. She seemed exceedingly lady-like. And while he took her hand in his with a gentle pressure, he continued:

‘Do tell me, Miss Kate. I can sympathise with you; and if I can aid you, heaven knows that I will!’

The lady gently returned the pressure of his hand. She looked up at him; he thought that a tear was gathering in her bright eyes; but she dropped them again beneath the shadow of her long lashes; and another sigh came from her lips. She made no other reply; and this made Charles only the more pressing to know what was the cause of her sorrow.

At this moment the champagne was brought before them, the cork flew from the long-necked bottle, and Charles, receiving the two brimming glasses from the waiter, handed one to his companion, who simply placed it to her lips, then, without drinking, set the glass again upon the salver.

'Will you not take your wine?' asked Meadows; and there was tender solicitation in his tone.

'I thank you,' replied the girl; 'but I seldom touch wine. It is not that which can raise *my* spirits;' and once more she sighed.

Oh do tell me—do tell me, Miss Kate, what your sorrows are. I feel for you—will alleviate them if it be in my power. I will be as a brother to you!

'A brother!' murmured she; and now she hid her face in her handkerchief, while she continued—'I had a brother once, one who, if he had lived, never would have seen me here in this dreadful place, leading a life so full of brimming misery! Oh, sir, if you knew all, you would pity me!' and now he could hear her sob.

'I do pity you, dear girl; indeed I do. Tell me all; I must hear it; I will aid you.'

'There are too many listeners here: the others would jeer and laugh at me if they heard all that I would say.'

'Then why not go to another room; have not you a room?'

'But sir, you have been so kind—your voice is so full of pure sympathy for me, I cannot ask you up there, where, Heaven knows, I have spent hours of misery! My room is up stairs;' and then she faltered, sighed again, and in a tremulous tone added—'there is a bed in it!'

'It matters not; you need not fear me; I only wish to hear of your sorrows—to alleviate them if I can,' cried the young man. And now he set down his untasted glass of wine.

'I cannot deny any request from one so kind and noble as yourself,' said the girl, and she arose to lead the way. After they had reached the hall, as they were about to ascend the staircase which led into the second story, Miss Kate made an excuse to return to the room for her handkerchief, which she had 'accidentally' dropped; but had Charles returned with her, he would have seen her pause by the side of Mrs. B., to whom she whispered:

'I've caught him, Julia! I came the sentimental over him, and I think I'll make a *few* out of him! He is going up stairs to listen to a tale of sorrow.'

The hostess smiled sweetly, and as Kate walked away, remarked to a gambler-looking man who sat by her side:

'Kate is the most profitable girl in my house, Jack.'

Reader, we will not linger here in this garden of corruption. We could, if we would, show you such mysteries and miseries

here as you little dream of; but this is a book in which we have pledged ourself not to write one line that we would not lay before a young sister's eye. It would be impossible for us to dwell upon the scenes here and describe them as they are, without overstepping that pledge. Therefore, we will leave Harry and Gus drinking champagne with their already drunken companions, and Charles Meadows to listen to a hackneyed story, which will only end in his giving Miss Kate all the money in his pocket to save her from the impending misfortune which has made her so sad; and we will leave her so overcome with his nobleness and generosity, that she cannot part with him that evening; and let you imagine more or less as you choose.

CHAPTER VI.

IN one of those beautiful streets which stretch across from Broadway to the North River, not far from Union Square, stands among many, a two story brick building with a small yard in front, which is protected by an iron-railing. The building is very neat; its brass knobs on the door and bell wire are brightly polished, there is not a speck of dirt upon the marble door-steps. Even the little evergreen trees in the yard are trimmed down with quaker-like neatness. The window-blinds are closed and the house seems still and quiet, as if it was not inhabited.

The time when all this so appeared, was but a day or two after the first date in our story.

If that house looked cold and rather cheerless without, it was far from being so within. In the back parlour, which was quite richly furnished, sat a rather corpulent gentleman, who seemed rather past the prime of his life, of fifty or fifty-five years apparently. He sat upon a sofa, which was drawn up in front of a glowing coal fire, and was engaged in reading one of our city periodicals. There was a spice of dandyism in his dress and manner—an eye-glass hung dangling from his neck, which, of course, was worn more for ornament than use, since he seemed to read easily without raising it to his eye. Everything in the room wore the same appearance of neatness which we have observed before in the outside appearance of the dwelling. Each book upon the centre-table was laid at an equal distance from its next neighbour—each article of furniture was free from dust, and placed in exact positions about the room.

The gentleman who sat alone here, was also, in his dress and looks, as neat as the room. His hair, which once had been black, and in fact was now only sprinkled lightly with

grey, was brushed up into a peak which concealed a baldness of the crown, and it was also combed down at the side to meet a pair of rather heavy but well curled half-whiskers, which, by their jetty blackness, showed that they had been dyed.

Reader, this is Mr. Peter Precise, who has just retired from the business of soap and candle making, in which he has realised quite a fortune; and, moreover, he has but recently learned that he possesses an interest in a family property in England, or is supposed to, for, on the mother's side, he is a descendant of the celebrated '*Hunt* family' of England. His character and his name are very like. During his business life, he never varied in anything; never lost a debt, or failed to pay one; for, in the first place, he would credit no one without a precise knowledge of the means of paying; in the second, he never bought anything that he could not pay for.

He was a bachelor, not because he did not like the female sex, but because he could never find a woman who did everything by rule as he did,—who rose at just such a minute each day, retired at just such an hour each night, and did just so much work. He never kept a hand in his employment, who did more or less than he was required—a single blot upon his ledger would be the surety for his book-keeper's dismissal; even if his waggon horse stumbled, Mr. P. would sell him and get another. In early life he always said that he would retire from business when he had acquired a fortune of fifty thousand dollars, and as his books were balanced at the end of each month, he knew at that time the precise amount of his property. And on the very day when he found that he really was the owner of the fifty thousand dollars, he gave up his concern to one who had long been his clerk, paid eight thousand dollars for the house and lot which we have described, and retired to pass the rest of his life in comfort.

But he found that he was exceedingly lonesome, now that he had given up business; his very regularity had become so habitual, that each morning found him up at his old hour, and frequently, before he remembered that he had retired, he would be on his way to the 'old stand.' He had quite a good library, and with it possessed some taste for reading. To this, and a correspondence with several lawyers and members of the Hunt family, he had now devoted himself, and in consequence of the labour of letter-writing, and his loneliness also, he had advertised for 'an intelligent, neat, discreet young man, to act as a clerk and companion to an elderly gentleman, retired from active business.'

One of the many Intelligence Office keepers, a man known to Jack Circle and his gang as Sheney Bill, (the word Sheney, among them, means Jew,) had seen this advertisement, and at once, in connection with Jack, had taken means to supply the

said 'intelligent and discreet young man,' as we have seen in our last interview with Mr. Frank Hennock.

As we said before, Mr. Precise was seated upon his sofa, which was drawn before the fire, reading, when he heard his door-bell ring. He did not lay down his periodical; but he ceased to read, and listened, while the servant, who came up from the basement kitchen, answered the ring.

In a moment she came to the parlour door, and announced that a young man, a very nice looking young man, was at the door, who wished to see Mr. P. Precise.

'Tell him to come in, Jenny, my dear!' said Mr. P. in a quiet tone; 'and see that he wipes his feet on the door mat, Jenny.'

The girl turned away to obey, and Mr. Precise, getting his eye-glass to his left eye, in the most fashionable style, awaited the appearance of Mr. Frank Hennock.

Mr. Precise saw a rather pale, and very steady looking young man before him, and for a few moments gazed at him from head to foot, as if he would read his character in the glance. Frank seemed to feel that much depended on that look, for, simply bowing, without speaking, he remained in a respectful posture until Mr. Price took down his glass and said:

'You may step forward, young man. You have come to apply for the situation of private secretary with me, eh?'

'Yes, sir. Here are letters for you,' and Frank produced what Matilda Horton had called 'the papes.'

Mr. P. took them and glanced over the contents of each. Then again raising his eyes to Frank, he scanned him with another long and steady look.

'Looks neat—rather thread-bare, but neat!' he muttered in soliloquy:—'hands clean; wonder if he uses my soap—hair nicely brushed—clean shirt—looks as if he would do, but musn't trust to looks.'

Then addressing Frank, he asked—

'Can you write a good hand—no scratching or blotting, eh?'

'Yes, sir—I will give you a sample, off-hand, if you wish!' replied Frank, in a very meek tone.

'You shall. Go to that secretary, upon which stands the book-case, let down the draw-leaf, of which here is the key. In the right hand drawer find paper; in the pigeon-hole above it is pens; ink is at the right hand corner. Take them and draw me up a letter.'

'What kind of a letter, sir?'

'Such a one as you would have written if I had addressed you and offered you the situation that you ask for!'

Frank did as he was directed, and in the course of a couple of minutes handed the letter to Mr. P.

The latter read it, muttering as he did so: 'Very neat—well

worded—no blots—letters well formed. You've been to school—studied hard—good boy, eh?

'I have studied and read much, sir!'

'Fond of reading, eh? You shall read to me—'twill be a good way of passing the long winter evenings. What do you like to read best?

'I prefer religious works, sir, but sometimes read poetry.'

'Read to me.'

'I will read you a poem of my own, sir, if you please.'

'What! young man, can you write poetry yourself? You're an extraordinary lad!'

'I have written a little verse at times, sir; yet, I dare not call it poetry,' replied Frank, very modestly.

'Well, sir, I'll judge of that for myself. If you have your poem about you, read it.'

Frank drew a much worn piece of paper from his pocket, and was about to commence reading, when Mr. P. interrupted him, by bidding him draw a chair and sit down.

This order obeyed, Frank again raised the paper, but before reading, said:

'I must tell you, sir, how I came to write upon the subject I offer to you. I had been out all day in search of a situation, and was going home to my mother, when I thought of going through one of the poorer parts of the city, and oh! sir, you cannot believe how much misery I saw in that walk. I did so wish that I was rich, to help the poor creatures, for I saw them ragged! yes, almost naked, some of them in the street and they looked so hungry!'

'You are a good boy, I believe!' said Mr. P., evidently moved by this mark of Frank's feeling, and then he added, 'You wrote this poem about them, did you?'

'Yes, sir; I will read it to you now. I call it

'PITY THE POOR.

" The winter-times are coming fast,
Pipes loud and shrill the autumn blast,
And leafless limbs are quivering,
And houseless ones are shivering;

With your eye
You may spy
Naked feet
'Mid the sleet;

Then pity, oh! pity the poor,
Who stand in the cold at your door!

" When your hearth-fire blazeth brightly,
Even as it burneth nightly;

When you hear the wild winds, chilly
Pipe their warning loud and shrilly,

In the storm,
See the form,
Thin and pale,
Hear the wail

Of the suffering; list the cry,

' Help the poor! Help them, or they die !'

" Clothed in rags so thin and scanty,
Live they in some cheerless shanty ;
Doors unhung and windows open,
Roof all leaky, walls all broken ;

There half dead
Without bread
Hear them cry :
' Must we die ?

Perish we in this great city,
None to save and none to pity ?'

" 'Mid the snow and 'mid the hailing,
Christians, hear the orphan's wailing !
Ye are bless'd with Heaven's plenty,
While their fare is poor and scanty.

Loud the blast
Whistles past ;
At your door
Stand the poor,

There are many in this city,
Few to aid and few to pity !"

Frank read this little poem with much feeling, and when he closed, Mr. Precise arose and walking to his side, laid his hand on his shoulder and after looking down in his face a moment, said :

' What is your name, young man ?'

' Frank Hennock, sir.'

' Oh, yes ; it was so in the letters ; I had forgotten,' and then Mr. P. once more read the letters over.

' You seem to be a good boy, Frank ! I like you ; if you do well and are particular and faithful, I'll do well by you. I am very *particular*, you must remember that ! Now, what wages do you want ?'

' I don't know, sir, really ; I have a poor mother to take care of !' Here Frank took care that his voice should tremble a little, while his face became still more elongated.

' Love your mother, eh ? I *knew* you was a good boy. You shall have forty dollars a month ; commence at six o'clock to-morrow morning. Remember, at six o'clock, exactly.'

' I can come to-night, sir, if you wish.'

' I *said* six o'clock ; I don't want you one minute before or after that time. I get up at ten minutes before six ; I am

dressed in exactly ten minutes, and then I come down and read the morning papers. Jenny makes the fire at five. You understand me now ?

‘Yes sir ; I will be here.’

As Frank said this, he arose to leave the room, when again Mr. P. asked :

‘Have you been to dinner, young man ?’

No, sir,’ replied Frank.

‘Then stay here till dinner is ready.’ The elderly gentleman took out his watch, and after glancing at it, said :

‘Jenny will set the table in precisely eleven minutes. I have but two servants : one is my cook, the other my house-maid.’

Then another thought seemed to cross the mind of Mr. P. ‘Do you ever drink wine ?’ he asked of Frank.

‘No, sir,’ replied the latter, ‘it goes against my principles to drink.’

‘Good boy—very good boy ! No small vices—quite neat—I do declare I’m in luck,’ muttered Mr. P., and then he asked again :

‘Do you like to go to church ?’

‘Oh, yes, sir, I always go when I can.’

‘What church do you go to ?’ continued the other.

The quick eye of Frank caught sight of a large ornamental prayer book, upon the centre-table, and without hesitation he responded :

‘To the Episcopal, sir.’

‘To my own church—I have indeed found a treasure,’ continued Mr. P., and then he said :

‘Go to the door, Frank, and ring the little bell which hangs there ; Jenny will come, and you will bid her show you to the room next to mine. You will just have time to wash before dinner—I always wash before dinner—you will find soap there of my own making, very fine old soap it is, too !’

The young man obeyed the order—Jenny came and Frank was shown to the room. As they went up stairs, Frank could not help admiring the neat figure of Jenny, who was indeed a very pretty girl. The room to which he was shown was like every thing in the house, neat, clean, and orderly to an extreme.

When the maid opened the door, she paused and said :

‘This is the room, sir.’

‘Thank you, thank you kindly, my fair friend,’ replied Frank, with a little affectation in his tone ; then as he saw that she still paused, he remarked :

‘We shall be better acquainted by-and-by, Miss Jenny.’

‘La, why you know my name,’ said the girl ; ‘how did you find it out ?’

'Our master told it to me.'

'*Our* master!' echoed the girl; 'why, you aint a going to come and live here, are you?'

'Yes; I am his private secretary.'

'I don't know what that is,' replied the girl; 'but I'm so glad you're coming. I never sees no company; the old cook is deaf as a post, and I've been so lonesome.'

The bell from the parlour interrupted the conversation, and Jenny was obliged to hurry below.

'Just the very kind of a place for me; I am like to be appreciated all round, above and below stairs,' muttered Frank, while he prepared himself for dinner.

CHAPTER VII.

STILL another place and a new scene in our metropolis, reader.

In Frankfort Street, close by Gold Street, stands a dingy-looking, two-story frame house, which has been long known as a 'watering-place' and 'dance house' for thieves and pickpockets. Regular thief soirees were given here, at the date of our story; and very popular among crossmen was Dame Buckley, the hostess thereof.

She prided herself on her English derivation, or rather on her birthright, for she was, like some other of our friends, a lady of the 'St. Giles' class. She gloried in calling her house 'The Star and Garter,' and boasted oft of the 'old country liquor' which she kept on hand. The best 'mountain dew,' the finest 'bog poteen,' the richest ale and porter in all the States, could be found, she said, in her cellar. The lady, at the time of the present writing, has found a more central position in the city, where, at 'the Rising of the Sun,' any reader who is so disposed can find her, and learn if the following portrait be not correct.

Madame, or Kate Buckley, as she prefers to be termed, is full five feet ten inches high; the same length of tape would be required to pass around her, and in shape she very much resembles an exceedingly large sack of wool, girded in the middle and tied with a ruffle at the top. With light brown hair, not too thick for comfort in summer weather; her eyes rather small, of bluish-grey colour; and a face that looks very like the sun rising through a fog-bank, she stands in her 'native beauty' before you. She looks as if 'a wee drop of spiritual comfort, taken often,' was her doctor's prescription; indeed, if we may judge from looks, we can believe that, like the Irish grog-shop keeper, she is her own best customer. Were you to see her as we have, surrounded by her peculiar friends, the flashy crossmen of the town—her thin hair curled

into all kinds of negligé tresses—her flabby ears pendant with huge, broad ear-rings—a fathom or two of red and yellow ribbon bound around her head and neck, looking for all the world like a sailor's idea of a 'Moll Wapping' grog-shop sign, you think her a subject for a moment's study.

But to our story. On an evening not much later than that which chronicles the meeting of the burglar gang at Jack Circle's establishment, Madame Buckley had a grand soiree at the 'Star and Garter.' Little Charley Cooper and his pal, Big Lize, were there; but none of the others whom we met at Jack Circle's, though the entire company was composed of crossmen and their women.

The music was made up of one fiddle scraped by a blind negro, a tambourine played by a very fat Dutch girl, and a harp touched not very lightly by 'a German travelling *artiste*,' and to the concord of sound thus produced, many a lively measure was stepped over the dame's rather greasy floor. Cotillions, fore-and-afters, reels, and waltzes were danced; liquor 'suffered' *some*, and jollity was the order of the night.

But while the dancing was going on in the outer room, in an inner and more private apartment, a still richer scene was occurring.

The meeting which we were about to describe, was composed of about a dozen and a half of thieves and 'knucks,' who were listening to a dissertation on the art and glory of their profession, coming from the lips of Captain Tobin, one of the finest looking men, and the most expert pickpocket that walks Broadway, or attends the crowded places of amusement.

'Ah, shentlemens,' said he, at the same time, touching his glass of claret to his lips,—he would drink no other liquor—'Ah, shentlemens, zis iz one life of ver grand excitement! You go into a push—you keep one peep open for ze coppare—ze ozzare you keep move 'bout for find ze dummy, eh? Vel, you no shall see ze coppare—you shall feel for ze dummy, or ze skin, you shall sink you 'ave got him; by dam one coppare come look you right in ze ver face! You get very much excite, eh? But, by dam, you no say nossing—you go look for anozzar push, and zen, may be, 'ave ze good luck—touch ze swag, and zen you 'ave make ver much glory, ver much honor! Ah, it is one bizznasse magnifique! Napoleon, ze gran Napoleon, would 'ave make one ver gran gnof, if he try. S'pose like me, zat gran sheneral shall 'ave misfortune ven he was young, eh? S'pose he lose his rank, he come ze fob on some of ze nobilitie, and zey invite him to go to Amerique, as zey did me, he would 'ave been one ver grand captain like me, eh? Yes, by dam! He would 'ave been ze Napoleon of New York!'

After thus delivering his opinion of Napoleon, Captain

Tobin seated himself behind the long table, and with an air of dignity commenced sipping his claret.

While he did this, another of the party arose, and a curious looking customer he was. Standing exactly six feet three inches high, round shouldered, and withal, a little stooping, Mr. John Murphy was anything but a beauty. His face was thin and long of the mould usually called 'lantern jawed'—his complexion smoky; his eyes small and dark; his whole appearance *thiefish*.

He arose, and looking first at Captain Tobin, and then at the rest of the worthies, said:

'By Jabers, Cap'n, but it's you that's got the larnint, and I'd rather hear you spake than to patter myself ony day—but I've a bit uv a question to ax ye!'

'Vel, sare, vat shall it be?' and, as the Frenchman spoke, he looked with rather a contemptuous expression upon the dirty, badly dressed fellow who stood before him.

'Why, if ould Boney would have made as good a gnof as yer honer, what would ould Nosey Willington 'ave been if he'd adopted the perfession.'

'By dam, zare, nevare mention zat man to me! Dam ze man zut wheep ze gran' Napoleon!' The Frenchman emptied his glass now, and with a very ferocious air, grasped the bottle and refilled it.

'I beg your pardon, Cap'n,' continued Mr. Murphy, 'but if you spake uv the one, the other is as sure to come afore ye in yer thinkin' box as two crows of the same colour; and ye never seed a white one.'

'Blast me if I have'nt!' said 'Long Bill,' alias William Williams, *Esquire*, another tall, villanous looking dog, with *thief* written by the hand of Nature upon every feature.

'An' where was it, Bill, that ye come foreninst the crater?' asked John.

'Why, in "the Bay" to be sure—there where I seed the red monkeys, and all that!'

'Was it where you married the she nager?'

The brow of Bill, black before, grew darker still at this question, and he replied in a growl:

'Better be careful of yer blarney, my cove, or you'll know the game uv fives afore ye die!'

'And by Jabers, Jack Murphy is jist the lad that ud like to be larnt that game by the likes uv you!' cried the Irishman, squaring his immense form into a position for action.

The Englishman sprang to his feet, and was about to pitch into Murphy, when Captain Tobin arose very calmly, and stepping between them, in a very quiet tone, said:

'Beg your pardon, messieurs, but zis is ver wrong. Zere is no need for fight viz yourselves; ven you must fight, do it viz

somebody zat is your enemy. S'pose you take one glass of grog, razzare zan fight, eh?"

'Bloody my eyes, if I cares which I' cried Bill; and with one of his most comical squints, Murphy added:

'Divil the bit uv difference ud it make to me, if it wor na for obleegin' the Cap'n. I'll drink wi ye Bill!'

The two villains at once sent a pale, sickly looking girl, who stood back by the door, out to Ma'am Buckley for a stiff'ner each, of grog, and the quarrel was settled for the time.

While these things were going on within, the 'ball' in the outer room was progressing on the Crockett principle, and the thieves, with their ladies, were enjoying their share of this world's fun and 'nothin' else.'

We have given you here but a glimpse at this scene, for the purpose of introducing you to some characters which will hereafter take prominent parts in our drama, and repay, perchance, the lack of interest which this chapter may possess. We have a hard task before us, in following real life, instead of imitating some great predecessors in foreign cities, and giving a clear scope to fancy; and we shall need the kind indulgence of our readers—we were about to say of the *critics* also, but will not, for with them we intend to be as independdnt as a wood-sawyer on a rainy day with a 'quarter' in his pocket asking no favours—wishing none.

CHAPTER VIII.

'WELL, Charley, how did you pass the night? Rested sweetly, I hope! You slid off so quietly, that Gus and me didn't even miss you, till we heard that you had gone to look at the pictures!'

Thus, in a light and careless tone, did Harry Whitmore address Charles Meadows, when they met the morning after the trio had determined to go on a 'bender.' The meeting occurred just in front of *Pintoux*; and Meadows really looked as if he needed a gin-cocktail, or some other reviving beverage. He was pale and haggard; his eyes were sunken, and had a blue semi-circle beneath them. Whitmore looked at him in astonishment.

'Why, Charley,' said he, 'you look as if you'd just been dragged through a sick Frenchman! What is the matter with you, my boy?'

With a dry, husky voice, Meadows replied, as Yankees often do, by asking another question,

'Do you think they ever drug their wine in that place?' said he.

'In what place do you mean—in Leonard Street?'

'Yes; there where I have passed the night. God forgive me for it!'

'Why, what made you think so?'

'Because I only drank three glasses of wine, and it made me as drunk as I could be. I have been stupid drunk all night, and awoke just now with such a headache as would make a saint forget his prayers, and set a Millerite to cursing!'

'But you remember you drank brandy before you went in there.'

'Only four or five glasses. I never was capsized with so little before; I am sure that the wine was drugged.'

'No, I don't think Jule ever would allow it; but I can explain the way you got tight so soon. You had been drinking strong brandy, and then, walking in the cold, did not feel it; but your coming into a warm room suddenly, and taking three or four glasses of effervescing champagne, laid you out. I have been served so a hundred times.'

'Well, it may be so,' sighed Meadows; 'this is the first time I ever spent such a night, and in such a place. God grant it may be the last.'

'Oh, pshaw! Why, Charley, I'm sorry to see you so. Let's go in and imbibe a cocktail; you'll feel better after it. By the way, how's your purse this morning?'

'Empty. I gave every cent to a poor unhappy creature, who has promised to leave the dreadful life, which from misfortune and necessity she was obliged to lead, and go home to her poor heart-broken mother. She has a sister, too, dying of consumption, and now she can see her before she dies.'

Harry looked at his companion a moment steadily, and then burst out into a hearty laugh.

'Do you mean to say,' cried he, 'that you gave Kate Hall the whole of your money?'

'Yes; every cent. I know it was half yours, but that I will refund.'

'And she told you about her sick sister—her heart-broken mother, eh?'

'Yes; but why do you smile? why use this tone of levity?'

'Because I didn't think you could be quite so *green*.'

'I can't understand you; explain if you please!' cried Charles, in a tone of mingled mortification and anger.

'Why, Charley, there is no use in crying over spilt milk, but you've been awfully gammoned. Kate Hall has a sister, but she is as bad as herself. The two have been "out" for this ten or twelve years, and the sister has no more the consumption than I have the botts! As to the broken-hearted mother, that was all humbug. You've been most egregiously fooled!'

'Excuse me, *Mister Whitmore*,' said Charles, in a stern tone—'I hope that I know enough of nature not to be

deceived quite so easily. I tell you that tears are not to be made to order, and pumped up as you would salt water from a vessel's hold !

'That's just where you are mistaken, Charley. You needn't get mad with me, but as I said before, Kate Hall has most essentially done you brown ! She promised to quit the life she leads ?'

'Yes, and I, in turn, promised her never to enter a house of that kind again !'

'Well, by Jove, she *was* smart ! She only wanted you to keep clear of her in future. I'll bet you five hundred dollars that if you'll go there one week from now, you'll find her, and she will be the jolliest girl in Jule's crowd. Will you bet on her ?'

'Yes, I will, sir ! I am not a fool, and I would be one if I was deceived in that way ! I'll bet you five hundred, and when it is won, I'll send it to the poor girl whom you so belie !'

'Well, Charley, you shall, *when* you win it. And now for that cocktail.'

The two young men entered the beautiful saloon of Pinteux, and doubtless the pretty bar-maid of the 'Café des Mille Col-
lonnes' suited them to a T with the desired beverage.

They came out in a few moments, and Meadows seemed to be in a much better humour. Whether this was caused by the spiritual comfort which he had just taken, or by a smile from the pretty bar-maid, or by some new concession from Harry, we are unable to determine.

As they stood in front of the door, Harry said :

'You go down town, Charley, do you not ?'

'Yes,' replied the other ; 'I shall breakfast at Bardotte's, and then go to the store.'

'Well, we must part then. I'm going up town. By the way, when shall we meet ?'

'Whenever you please, after business hours.'

'Well, say up here, two or three doors above, where I always buy my cigars—where sweet Mary deals out tobacco and smiles nightly.'

'At the pretty cigar girl's, do you mean ?'

'Yes ; have you never been in there ?'

'No ; I do not smoke. But I have seen her as I passed the window.'

'Well, meet me there at six, or half-past if it suits you better. Mary is a great girl, using the *figurative* sense. I've a story to tell you about her some time. But you'll be there ?'

'Yes, at six, exactly, for at half-past six we take tea at home, and you shall go up to tea with me. I wish you to see my 'Bella, and my mother.'

Oh, what a speaking volume there was in the pleasure-flash

which gleamed from Harry Whitmore's eyes, as he received this invitation. It said more plain than words—'all is in a right train—I am in luck—Satan is helping his own.' But he quietly responded :

'I shall be most happy: I'll be on the spot, Charley.'

Then they separated; the one going down, the other up Broadway.

CHAPTER IX.

FRANK HENNOCK had been installed two days in his new situation, and in these two days had completely wrapped himself in the good opinion of Mr. Precise. And Jenny, the maid, declared him mentally to be a 'proper, nice young man, and so 'mazin' cute over his books, that an unlarnt body couldn't help a likin' him!

It was on the second night of his secretaryship, the hour seven, and at a cosy little tea-table, sat Mr. Precise and his confidential clerk, as he was pleased to term Frank. The coal fire gleamed brightly in its polished grate; the tea-urn steamed cheerily; the large astral lamp threw a mellow light over the neat apartment.

While all was so comfortable within, the wind whistled through the leafless branches of the tree that stood before the house, as the seaman often hears it pipe amid his rigging, when, with reefed sails and bending spars, his ship dashes and plunges through a storm-lashed sea. The sleet came with a harsh and cutting rattle against the closed window-blinds, and all the sounds which they could hear spoke of cold and storm.

'It is a bitter night, Francis—a bitter night. It reminds me of what you say in the poem which you read to me,' said Mr. P., at the same time bidding Jenny, who waited at the tea-urn, to place one more lump of sugar in his cup.

Frank looked very grave, made a shudder, then looking down at his plate, replied :

'Yes, sir, and it e'en a'most kills me to think how the poor people do suffer in such times as this! I can't eat any more supper now, sir, for you "bring to memory back the feelings,"—no, the scene I mean, which I saw on the very night I wrote that poem. A scene where starving, freezing, dying wretches lay in filth and rags and misery all around me! Oh sir, I do thank God that I have a home and place; but were I rich, I'd not sit here; no sir, *indeed* I would not!'

'What would you do?' asked Mr. P., in a kindly tone!

'Do, sir? Why, I'd go out and help the poor creatures—I'd carry 'em bread and clothes. There are one thousand persons in one house in this city, and I don't believe there is

a fire in the whole house, or even one bed ! I saw that on the night when I wrote that poem, sir !

'*Francis !*' said Mr. P., and he raised both his hands, either to express surprise or disbelief. 'Francis, I cannot believe this ! Young man, if you ever deceive me in but one single word, I am done with you for ever !'

Frank crossed his hands upon his breast, and his face wore a look of deep humility and sadness. He must have been pained by this insinuation.

'I am sorry, sir, if you should doubt me ; but if you will go with me this night, I will show you worse scenes than I have related, or you may discharge me in a minute.'

'I will go,' quickly said the old gentleman ; 'yes, I will go ! Jenny, my thick cloak—my over-shoes and woollen tippet. Bring them, I'll drink no more tea !'

But upon a second thought, Mr. Precise said :

'I have drank only *four* cups, I believe. Eh, Jenny ?'

'Only four, sir,' replied the maid.

'Then, before you go for my things, pour out one more. I always drink five—and put two of those lumps of sugar in, Jenny ; and, by the way, it seems to me that you've broken them a trifle smaller than I directed.'

'May-be yes, sir, but I didn't mean so if I did. I always try to be very particular,' replied the neat little maid.

'So you do. Very good girl—very good girl ! I'll do well by you, if you keep on so.'

The maid's pretty blue eyes sparkled as she heard this, and she quickly turned out the cup of tea, and putting in two of the largest lumps of sugar, handed it over to Mr. P.

'A trifle too full, my dear, a trifle too full,' said Mr. P. ; 'I never like to have a drop spilt into my saucer.'

'I'll be more careful, sir.' And again the maid curtsied and blushed.

'Well, now go up stairs and get my things, I'm agoing to walk out.'

'Oh, master, do not, please ! Hear how the wind blows and the sleet comes down !'

'That's the very reason I'm going out, child. Go and get my things,' replied Mr. P., firmly, and then he raised his cup to his lips.

Jenny turned to obey, saying at the same time, 'I only thought—I was so afeared you'd git a cold.'

'A good girl—a very kind, considerate girl !' said her master, when Jenny, carefully closing the door as she always did, had left the room. 'She'll make some man a good wife ;—neat, tidy, particular, saving, and pretty—very pretty !'

Jenny had paused in the entry, with her ear to the key-hole, and of course heard this.

'How I would like to be his wife—I do so want to be

married ! But I can't get him. I wonder if Frank don't feel like gittin married ! I *will* be somebody's wife before long ! These thoughts were murmured as she went up stairs for her master's things.

In about a half hour, Mr. Precise and Frank were fitted for their tour of inspection, and they started out, Jenny having very carefully loaded her master with everything in the shape of tippets and comforters which she could prevail on him to wear.

The two walked up as far as Broadway, and on the corner they waited for the omnibus which they could hear rattling along over the hard pavement. Soon, as it drew near, by the lamplight, they could see its driver wrapped in his oil-skin cape and heavy drab over-coat, and that he could see them was testified by his upraised hand, and voice almost as sharp as the wind :

'Down Broadway ? Ride—sir, *ride* ?'

A nod of assent from Mr. P. brought the omnibus close in to the side-walk, and our two friends were ensconced inside in a moment. When they got in, there were but two persons inside, and one of these recognised Frank in a moment. He did not, however, see Frank's sign for him to remain unknown and unknown, but reached out his hand quickly and said :

'Ah, ha ! my young frent ! I ver glad for see you !' And then Captain Julian Tobin looked at Frank's companion. At a glance he saw that he was well-dressed—he saw also, as his cloak was open, that a gold chain around Mr. P.'s neck betokened a watch to be in the fob, and his dark eye sparkled while he gazed.

Frank saw that it was too late to deny the acquaintance, and with perfect composure, said :

'Good evening, Captain Delamere ! I'm glad to see you !'

Captain Julian shook the young man's hand heartily, then as he shrugged his right shoulder slightly, gave a side glance toward Mr. Precise, as much as to say—'introduce me.'

Frank at once did so, and Mr. Precise thought the Frenchman a very gentlemanly man, both in looks and manners.

The other occupant of the 'bus' was a woman, and seated in the farthest corner from the light, she seemed to avoid observation. She was dressed in deep black. A black silk hood was close drawn over her face, and beside this, a thick crape veil of the same colour completely hid her features from view. She seemed tall, and even though much muffled up, appeared to have an elegant form.

The 'buss' now rattled down the street swiftly, but no more passengers got in. The night was so cold and stormy, that few, save the necessity-driven, or the prowling thief, were abroad.

Captain Tobin made himself exceedingly agreeable, and soon, in the course of the conversation, learned the intentions of Frank, and also got an inkling of the 'lay' which the latter was on.

When the omnibus had got nearly down to Leonard Street, the lady in black, as we must term her who sat in the darkest corner, pulled the check-string twice, the driver obeyed the sign and drew up at the left side of the street. Her sixpence she handed to Frank, who politely offered to pass it forward through the change window to the driver. After she got out, Frank, from mere curiosity, glanced through the window to see which way she went. As the 'bus' drove on, he saw that she had paused before the door of a bowling saloon, the lamps of which were opposite to where she alighted, and seemed to be beckoning or making signs to some one within.

'Some *liaison* or other!' muttered he, but at the same moment he pulled the check-string, for they were at the corner of Leonard Street, as he knew by the bright lights of the CARLTON HOUSE.

'You vil get out here, sare?' said Captain Julian. 'Ah, mon Dieu! but is ver colt! I shall help you out, sare—wrap you cloak ver tight, eh! I shall help you!' and the polite Frenchman made himself exceedingly busy about his new acquaintance. Frank's keen eye had detected the heavy but short steel nippers or scissors which the Captain held in his hand as he assisted Mr. Precise, and he knew at once that his master's 'thimble' must change pockets.

'Halves!' he whispered, as he passed out first, by Captain Tobin.

'Oui—to be sure, I nevere sheat my *frents*!' replied the expert pickpocket in the same low tone—then pulling again the cloak of Mr. Precise around him, he started to hand him out, but at the moment stumbled, and both of them slipped on the icy steps and fell.

'You is not hurt, sare, I hope?' said he with an air of great concern, as he helped Mr. P. up; and then receiving the thanks of the old gentleman, he sprang into the omnibus, crying:

'Go on, driver, I, myself, shall pay ze fare!'

And well he might, for, as the stage went on, he drew forward to the light and examined the watch which he had just succeeded in getting, by cutting the gold safety-guard.

'By dam!' he muttered, in a low gleeful tone—'by dam, I ave make one gran speculatione! Zis is one real Londonare, sirteen diamond! By dam, zey do glis'n! One hundred seventy-five dollare at least for ze timble, fifty more for ze shain! By dam, zis is ver goot speculatione!'

CHAPTER X.

AFTER Frank and his new master had reached the sidewalk before the Carlton House, the former led the way down Leonard Street toward Centre. Soon they passed the dark and frowning walls of the gloomy-looking 'Tombs,' wherein, at that moment, was many a heavy heart and burning brain; many a haggard wretch, upon whom the weight of crime was far heavier than all the chains which could be laid upon him.

Mr. Precise looked up at these high walls, and, as he gazed, said to his companion—

'What is that place? I did not know that there was such a one in all the town.'

'It's the jug, sir,' responded Frank.

'The jug, Francis? The what? I don't understand you!'

'The Tombs, I meant, sir. The crossmen always call it the jug.'

'The Tombs? I have heard of 'em often, but I always thought they were some low, dirty jail-place—some mean underground cells—not such an immense, castle-like building as this.'

Mr. Precise paused now, for they were in front of the building, and he looked upon its massive pillars, its dark and heavy front, and a feeling of awe stole over him, as the shade of a rising storm-cloud gathers over a sunny meadow.

'It is an awful place,' said he, and then they went on. His guide now kept across Centre, and down Orange Street to the Five Points. Their approach to the place could easily enough be known by the distant sound of fiddles and tambourines, for on its borders every house serves the double purpose of a brothel and a dance-house.

The old gentleman drew close up to his young clerk, for these were new sounds that he heard, this wild music, and he began to hear shouts and yells—the laughter of drunken women, and the curses of villanous-looking men, who were staggering about very close to him.

'Take my hand, Francis—take my hand and keep close to me,' said Mr. Precise, in a very under-tone. 'This must be a dreadful low place; isn't there some danger?'

'No, sir, not while I'm along,' replied Frank. 'I know their ways; you just keep cool, and say nothing, but use your peepers.'

'You're a brave, good boy, Francis; but what are peepers? You use some strange expressions.'

'I was using the kind of language which you'll hear to-night, sir. Peepers mean *eyes*; but hurry along with me, sir, and don't be afraid, I'll take care of you.'

'You're a brave boy—I like you—I'll do well by you, I will!' murmured the old gentleman; and then he drew closer to Frank, for now they were in the Points, and strange sights, smells, and sounds came to his senses. He gazed with wonder at the long rows of little wooden buildings, their cellars sunk far below the swampy street, and, as he passed them, he gazed upon rooms filled with ill dressed men, and painted, bloated women, who were drinking, dancing, shouting and carousing.

Every little while he would mutter, 'it's an awful place here—an awful place;' and he would shudder and start as the disgusting-looking creatures would stare him in the face.

As they drew down to the centre, to the point where five streets most, Frank paused and said—

'I'll show you the soup-house first, sir, where a good many of these people get all they ever eat!'

Frank led the way into a nasty-looking little place which stood upon the corner before them, and Mr. Precise saw a long, narrow counter, before which stood a row of miserable-looking creatures, some eating from nasty bowls and tin cups a dark, greasy mess; others with pieces of meat in their hands; still others with glasses filled—not with water.

'Stand here in the corner and look on for a little while,' said Frank, in a lone tone.

'I feel sick—I shall vomit if I stay here. Oh *such* a smell! Who can eat here: let us go!' whispered the old gentleman. But as he had to move aside from the door to get out of the way of some new-comers, Frank drew him to the corner.

These new-comers were a man and two women, all three Irish; and the cloak of Mr. Precise contained more cloth than they had on altogether.

'And it's a saxpence we've got, and a bloody good blow-out we'll have uv it,' cried the man as he entered; and then turning to a small-pox marked, pale, thin-faced, red-eyed woman, who had an old coffee-bag for a shawl, he added:

'I say, Nance, shall we have some o' the ould divil's broth?'

'I don't care, Jemmy, so it's somthin' to eat? Niver the bit have I had hould of the day!' replied the woman. And then her female companion added, 'An', by me sowl, it's me that can't brag of bein' ahead ov ye, Nance. My ould man, or my childer be all gone off, too, the snakin' brats.'

'Never mind that, *Missis* Haggerty: I've a saxpence, an' it's my threet now—it is.'

As the man said this, he crowded into a place in front of the counter, and assuming quite a patronising tone and air, cried:

'It's a penny 'orth o' broth that I'll have, and I'll have thray spoons to ate it wid.'

'Down with the clink, then,' replied one of the dirty-lock-

ing fellows behind the counter, and when the Irishman laid down the penny, he handed over a bowl of the nasty-looking scum which he had called for. The three spoons were in it, and each of the trio seized one, and went to work. The bowl contained about a pint and a half, and it took these creatures about fifteen seconds to clear it, and the man closed the meal by *licking* the bowl clean, and handing it back.

'And now a wee drap of the crater wudn't hurt us,' said he, again laying down one penny.

A glass of very white-looking liquor, called by those who drink it 'turpentine gin,' was handed over, and the glass was full. The man took a third at a swallow, then handed it to Nance, who took her share, and passed it to *Missis Haggerty* for a finish.

'An' now, *ladies*, what shall we be afther having nixt ! I've get more money left, by jabers !'

'And it's a smoke 'ud comfort me poor breaking heart !' replies *Missis Haggerty*, and her motion was seconded by Nance.

'An it's a smoke we'll all have ; so jist lind up the loan of thray pipes an' a penny 'orth o' baccy in 'em !'

'Three more cents were laid down—three short stemmed, black, clay-pipes, that had probably been in a thousand mouths before, were lighted by one of the 'clerks' of the establishment, he taking a whiff through each to do so, and handed to the party. They were still obliged to stand before the counter and smoke, for fear they would run away with the pipes, but they were not long in getting through.

Handing back their pipes, the *feasted* turned away to give place to others who were coming in.

'An' its yerself that's the gintleman, Jemmy !' said the women as they went out, 'an' a blessed good time we've had wid ye the night !'

During this scene, Mr. Precise had hardly breathed—his eyes were fixed upon the poor creatures before him.

'I wouldn't have believed it, he whispered—*five cents*, and they consider this a luxury. What is that black-looking stuff made of, Francis ?'

'Out of the offals that are thrown from the market, and the scraps of meat and leaves of cabbage and all that which is thrown out from the kitchens in the back-alleys, sir. Haven't you seen little children going about the streets with old bags picking up the refuse of the gutters ?'

'Yes, and grown people too !' replied Mr. P.

'Well, they bring all that stuff here and sell it !'

'Oh, Heaven ! *can* it be ! You did tell the truth about the poor people, Francis !'

'Why, sir, you haven't seen the *poor* people yet. The poor people don't come here. They can't afford it !'

'What ! Now, Francis, don't tell me stories, you're a good

boy, but don't tell me stories,' whispered the old gentleman. 'We'll see bye and bye, sir, we'll see!' replied Frank, 'and now let us go from here.'

They were about to pass out, when again the door opened and Mr. Precise drew back from the object which entered, with a shudder.

It was an old, white-haired man, at least the very few hairs upon his head were long and white. He had no hat on, and the sleet was still laying mixed in with the thin hairs upon his skull. His features were as sharp as bones could be, for the skin seemed to be pasted down upon them, even as would look a skeleton head with cracked parchment stuck upon it. He had no coat; a kind of shirt, made up of a piece of blanket, badly torn, without sleeves; an apology for a pair of what once had been summer trowsers for some sailor—and a pair of old socks made out of a piece of cast-away carpeting, formed that old man's dress. Had he not been so dirty he would have been very pale; but he had been laying down in some muddy place, and was carrying about a paper-sheet's thickness of it upon him. He might have been seventy or eighty years old—he might not have been over fifty; for poverty makes people grow old very fast.

Mr. Precise looked at this old man's sunken eyes: they were fairly *encaverned* in his skull, and looked as if daylight could hardly get in to them. He saw this with one hurried glance, and as he drew back with a shudder, he murmured:

'My God! Can all this *be*, in a Christian city!'

The old man drew up to the counter—in a feeble voice which sounded like a dull, dry crash of a rotten limb broken slowly from a tree, he asked of one of the fellows behind the counter.

'Plase give me a little of the soup—only a little. I ha'n't got a penny, but I'll get one to-morrow. I couldn't go out to-day, I was sick!'

'Then wait till to-morrow for your soup. We don't *trust*, and you knows that!' answered the brute.

Tears gathered in the eyes of Mr. Precise, he was about to start forward, and one hand was in his pocket, when the old man spoke again. His voice trembled even more than before, and two large tears came out from those sunken eyes, as you may have seen a drop perspire from the edge of a great rock.

'I ha'n't had nothin' since the bowl I bought last night; and I'm *so* hungry!' he said, as he pressed his long bony fingers against that part which, among our aldermen, is so apt to be prominent.

'I han't got your belly to take care of—clear out!' cried the thing who stood behind the counter in a tone more dog-like than before. The old man made no reply—he gave a kind of long breath, an *attempted* sigh—for he had not strength for a decent one. Then as he turned to go away, came a groan,

—Oh, how like it was to the sound which I once heard when I bent over the grave of a loved one, and saw the first clod of earth cast upon her coffin. It gave back a dull, sickening echo;—how like to that echo was the old man's groan.

Mr. Precise could no longer stand still; he sprang forward to the side of the old man, the hand which had been in his pocket was withdrawn, and in it was gold—bright yellow gold.

'Here, old man, here!' said he, and as he spoke, his voice was choked and husky, and great tears chased each other swiftly down his flushed cheek—'here is money, buy food!'

The old man looked at the gold, then at the offerer, he reached out his bony fingers to clutch it, but then he drew them back and shook his head.

'Ha'n't you got a penny?' said he, 'that's too much, they'd murder me for it if they knew I was so rich!'

'He is right, sir,' chimed in Frank, and even he, hardened as the young villain was, wept, but he continued—'the best way to serve him is to give him food and clothes, not money. He is old and weak, and the rest would rob him—kill him too, as like as not!'

'Then food he shall have and clothes too—here old man, I've got a warm cloak on, put it over your shoulders!' and Mr. Precise was about to give him his cloak, when Frank again stopped him.

'Don't do that, sir, it would be torn away from him and carried to a "fence" the moment your back was turned! If you'll go and buy an old suite at a second-hand shop, they may let him keep it, if it isn't worth much!'

Mr. Precise looked around at the villanous, haggard, hungry looking set who crowded up to see this scene. Their eyes were fixed upon that piece of gold in his hand, and they glared as would caged wolves at a piece of meat, when they were starving.

'It'll be dangerous for us to stay here;' whispered Frank, 'you ought not to have shown so much money. We'll take the old man out and get him food in a more decent place!'

But now the whole crowd opened a begging chorus at Mr. Precise. 'God bless yer honer, an' it's me as ha'n't had a bit to ate for a wake, and the childers nather!' cried one. Then, in another tone, came an appeal from a hideous pox-marked, one-eyed negro girl, who was so near naked, that the savages, of Africa would have been ashamed of her.

'What shall I do—what shall I do!' cried Mr. P., as they crowded in on him, and pushed him back against the wall. He was for a moment in a very dangerous position—there were two or three big negroes, regular Five Point thieves, who had crowded in. Frank saw that they were passing forward, and with quick presence of mind, seized the piece

of gold and pitched it to the end of the room farthest from the door.

'There, take it and divide it,' he cried.

With howls and curses at each other, the whole crowd rushed after the gold, pitching and tumbling over each other in their eagerness to get hold of the money—each one striving, fighting to get it for him or herself.

'Now—quick, out we go!' said Frank, and he raised the old man up in his arms and rushed for the door. It was a light weight—that bundle of skin-tied-together bones. His master followed, and as he got outside he heard shrieks, curses, and heavy blows within. As a pack of hounds fight over a hare—as they tear each other in the attempt to get a bite at the victim, so were these poor wretches fighting over that gold,

'Oh! God of mercy, is this real, or a dream?' groaned Mr. Precise, when he found himself outside in the wind and sleet once more, and then he paused to listen to the terrible sounds within.

'Don't stop, sir—don't stop, or some of 'em will be "spotting" you! Let us keep ahead—I'll take him to a decent grocery,' said Frank. Rushing along across the open space in the centre of 'the Points,' he paused at the door of a little shop at the corner of Anthony Street, and said:

'We'll go in here; but where do you live, old man?'

'I don't live anywhere now!' replied the poor old creature; 'I did live in the brewery, but I couldn't pay my board, and they turned me out!'

'Well, you shall have a place there; I'll see the agent in a minute. Come in here, sir,' and Frank beckoned to his master as he set the old man on his feet again; 'come in here, we'll get him a fit out, and then we'll go to the *brewery*! There's the place where *some* poor folks live!'

They went into the shop, which was half filled with whites and negroes, nearly all poor and ragged; some well-dressed wenches, others, villanous-looking creatures. Some were buying liquor—others wood—still others, food.

'Now, sir, we'll make our purchases,' said Frank. 'I'll take my arms full, and you shall pay for 'em.'

First, Frank took a dozen small sticks of wood from a large pile, which was corded up on one side. These were about six inches long, were perhaps an inch square—then he called for a string of onions, a piece of salt pork—a nasty looking piece they gave him, too, one which would weigh four or five pounds—a loaf of bread, a candle, and a card of matches.—Then he told the clerk to hand the old man one of a pile of second-hand blankets which lay inside of the bar. This was done.

'Now, sir,' said he to his master, 'we will go. Just pay the

bill, and mind don't show any *gold* again.'

'How much is it?' asked Mr. P. of the clerk.

'Let's see—wood, twelve sticks, three cents; meat, ten cents; onions, three cents; blanket, a quarter-dollar; bread, a penny: forty-two cents, all total, sir. Throw off the odd two cents, sir, you've bought so much!' replied the fellow behind the counter, who seemed much more decent than the other.

Mr. Precise stared at the man with a gaze of astonishment for a moment.

'Havn't you made a mistake?' said he; 'it's very little.'

'No, I guess not. Oh! yes, I did; there's the candle and matches, another cent, that's all.'

Mr. Peter Precise liked to be particular, and so he took out of his vest-pocket a little change—he counted out four ten-cent pieces and three cents.

'There's the amount,' said he. Then turning to Frank, he asked:

'Where now—where shall we go?'

'To the brewery, sir, to find a boarding-place for the old man.'

At this moment they heard a faint sob—the old man had been eating some of the bread, and had got strength enough to weep; and as he stood there with the blanket around him, the tears came again from some place in back of those deep-set eyes, and he sobbed.

'It tastes so good; I can't help it, but it tastes *so* good?' said he, in broken accents; and then Mr. Precise wept once more.

'Let us go now, it is getting latish,' urged Frank.

'I wonder what time it is?' said his master, and then, when he felt for his watch, he discovered its loss.

'Well, I do declare!' he cried. 'Why, how can this be?—My watch is gone, Francis!'

'Is it, sir?' asked the young man, earnestly; then looking at the fob, and feeling if it were there or not, he added, in a tone of astonishment—

'Why, so it is! I was afraid that them fellows in the soup-shop were crowding a little too close on you.'

'Do you think they took it there?'

'Oh, yes, sir. Them were all thieves, except one or two that were *low* beggars! This old man here wouldn't steal, but all of them darkies are thieves by profession.'

'Oh, my! What a place is this! Who could have dreamed it! I gave two hundred and thirty-four dollars for that watch and chain—they asked two hundred and thirty-five, but they discounted one dollar, because I paid them in city bills. And I never felt them take it; how strange!'

'No, sir, not so strange. They do up such things amazing neat.'

'Well they do!' and Mr. P. said this feelingly, as if he felt fully convinced of the fact.

'And now for the brewery. Come along, old man—come along, Mr. Precise. We'll go now where *poor* folks live!'

The three went out into the street. It was astonishing how much difference a half-loaf of bread had made in the old man. Why, he scarcely tottered at all as he led the way—he took steps almost as long as Frank did—and they were quick, glad steps. The poor fellow had at last met with a ray of summer's sunlight in his clouded winter—he had actually found a friend!

They went along the street until they came to a large brick building, once used as a distillery, now known as *the* 'brewery.' Into an alley which leads down on one side of it, a narrow, horridly smelling little sink of about two hundred feet long, known by the name of '*Murderer's Lane*, the old man led them. About half-way down this, he paused, and pointing down into a dark place, that seemed to yawn up, like a very mouth of darkness, at their feet, he said:

'There's where I boarded, afore they turned me out!'

'Let us go down and see the place!' said Frank, and then he took one of the candles which he had bought and stepping into a door-way, ignited a match by rubbing it against the wall, and lighted his candle. Then he came out, and stepped down into the cellar, which doorless lay before them. The old man followed—then Mr. Precise.

As they stepped into the hole, we cannot honestly call it anything else, Mr. Precise gazed around in speechless wonder. The tallow candle gave but a dim light, yet it was enough for him to see the contents of that room.

In one corner lay a heap, apparently, of rags, but at the sound of voices, and the glare of light, the heap moved, and a woman, a pale, haggard looking wretch, whose uncombed, dirty and matted hair fell down upon bony naked shoulders, raised up and gazed with a wild, inquiring stare upon the party. As she did so four children of different sizes, raised up and gazed too—and the poor things looked even more wan and wretched than she, and their faces wore an expression of mingled fright and wonder.

Mr. Precise looked in another corner—there he saw eight or ten—blacks and whites, raise from a perfect knot. They had hardly any clothes—and had been sleeping close, to keep warm, for a lot of old coffee bags, and some pieces of carpet was all that covered them. He shuddered—was about to speak, when a low, moaning groan was heard from another corner still.

He turned, and he saw a woman lying upon the bare earth—her face was all broken out in red blotches—two children laid beside her—one was very red in the face, like herself—the other was deathly pale—still its face looked as if birds had been pecking at it; or, as if some eating, chemical acid, had been dropped over it. The three had not enough clothing on to conceal their thin, fleshless limbs—they had no bed—not even a stone for a pillow.

‘My God! worse and worse! Good woman are you sick?’ cried Mr. P., as he rushed up to her side.

‘Yes,’ said she faintly, ‘an’ I belave one o’ the childers has died, for the poor crater is cold, an’ it won’t spake.’

‘Oh, heaven, so it is!’ cried Mr. P., as he felt its thin wrist, and found that its pulse was still, its hand ice-cold. ‘What was the matter?’

‘I don’t know,’ replied the woman, and she seemed hardly able to breathe—‘we’ve all been sick for a wake, and maybe the poor thing has died uv nothin’ to ate!’

‘Nothing to eat, and haven’t you had a doctor either?’

‘No, sir, we nivir had as much as a smithereen to pay one; and nivir a one could we git here widout it; and I was too wake afore I know’d it to go to the hospital!’

Frank looked down intently, for a moment, upon the woman and her dead babe, and then started back, pale with fear and horror.

‘Oh, my God, sir!’ he cried, ‘let’s go from here—‘she’s got the small-pox, see it’s broke out all over her! Let’s go, every moment is a damp of death to us!’

‘No—never will I leave such misery till I can relieve it—never!’

‘You will catch the disease, sir, you will die!’

‘I care not, if I die in doing my duty! God will take care of any one that tries to relieve such wretchedness as this!’ replied Mr. P., and tears streamed down his cheeks in torrents, and fell, like the holy rain of sympathy, upon that sick woman’s form.

‘Well, sir, what shall we do? Let us do all we can and go from here!’

‘I’ll tell you what! Do you run for a doctor first, and then go and buy wood and food, and clothes, and everything for these miserable creatures! Oh, God, can this be a Christian town!’

‘Well, sir, I’ll go!’ cried Frank, apparently glad to get out of that atmosphere; ‘but it’s dangerous for you to stay here! You’ve got money with you!’

‘Well, take it with *you*—I don’t go from here till I see a change in things! No, no! Thank God, I’ve got money, and now I know what to do with it. There’s a pocket-book in my

back coat-pocket, Francis—it has five hundred and eleven dollars in city bills in it, take it out !

Frank felt in the pocket—it was the work of a second for him, entirely unobserved, to slip the 'dummy' into his own pocket, while he pretended to feel for it, then, in a tone of surprise, he cried :

'Why, sir, there isn't no pocket-book here, them fellows in the soup-house must have got that too !'

'The old gentleman felt for it himself—then passed his hand into all his pockets. Of course his search was vain.

'Well, I never !' he exclaimed—'this is horrible. But I've two eagles left—here they are, loose in my pocket, take them, Francis, and if they don't go far enough, I've a warm coat on, my boy, I'll sell it ; yes, and look there, look there ! See them naked creatures shiver !'

Frank took the money and hurried out, and now the old man who had come in with them, looked Mr. P. in the face :

'Mayn't I make a fire, sir ? Mayn't I make a fire out of my wood ?' said he in tones stronger than he yet had used.

'Yes, old man, yes !' and as Mr. P. looked around, he saw the little fire-place. No sign of there ever having been a fire there, could be seen ; the walls were wet, the floor was the same, and filthy, too filthy for description was the whole place.

The old man carried his little bundle of wood to the fire-place ; the sticks were so small that they were easily lighted by a single match, which he rubbed against one of them. He only lighted four, for the old man was economical, but they blazed up and showed a brighter light in the apartment. And then, an old man, a very old one, more thin and haggard, if possible, than the one we have described, crept on his bones—I cannot truly call them hands and knees—through the filth to the fire. He crawled close up to it, and reached out his skeleton hands to warm them. There was no blood there ; why needed he to warm dry skin and bones ? Perhaps there was a little marrow left in them, which he would thaw. He had nothing on save an old ragged shirt ; no other clothing. And, as he lay stretched out, he looked at the pile of onions and meat which the other old man had set down beside him ; and, though he said no word, his look asked all that misery ever uttered. But, as a miser clings to his gold, so did the first old man hug his treasure. Where, thought he, or when will I ever get so much again.

But Mr. Precise saw the looks of both, and he said :

'Share with him, share with them all, old man ! You shall have more ; yes, plenty more !'

The old man seemed to do it unwillingly, but he gave the other an onion ; it was eaten, skin, root and all, in an instant.

‘Give him more; then go around and give the rest some!’ said Mr. P.

The old man obeyed, and it was strange to see how the naked, haggard wretches clutched the food—how they crushed it between their tremulous jaws, and then glared around to see if there was not more. The string of onions didn’t go far among seventeen persons, for this was the number in that hole; and, besides, the sick woman and her living child were too ill to be hungry—they could not eat.

‘Give them the meat—cook that and give it to them,’ said the old gentleman.

But they did not wait to have it cooked; they crowded around the fire, and, like wolves, tore it to shreds, and gulped it down unchewed. It was lean, nasty, dark-looking meat; but it seemed to slide right easily down their gaunt necks.

‘Put on all the wood, we will have more soon!’ cried Mr. P., and he rubbed his hands together with an expression of pleasure, at the thought that this misery should so soon be relieved.

And then he walked to and fro across the damp place; but when his eye fell upon the poor woman who was so sick, he saw her shivering with the cold. He took his large warm cloak from his back, and laid it over her. Never had that cloak covered such a sight before—a dead child, its dying sister, their mother in the same situation.

The doctor came, and Frank was with him, bearing his arms full of food and old clothes, and behind him came two negroes, carrying wood and other things.

‘Good boy—good boy; you’ve been quick!’ murmured the old gentleman. ‘And now, doctor, do what you can for these poor creatures. I will pay all expenses!’

The physician—a little, fat, round-faced, round-bellied man, who looked the reverse of Shakspeare’s apothecary—bent down over the woman, gazed at her a moment, then shook his head in a very ominous, or rather a meaning way.

‘It’s but little use; I tthink she’s too far gone! They may do something for her in the hospital. Better send for a cart, and have her and the live one carried there. If the other hadn’t died of this, it would have been worth *five* to the students for a subject. But it’s worth nothing now!’

‘What! do they ever buy these poor dead creatures?’

‘Oh, bless your soul, yes sir! A’most always, they very seldom bury folks that die here, they can always get something for ’em if they don’t die of *this*!’

‘Oh God, is it possible! Who could have believed it!’

‘Have you been up stairs, sir, yet? I’ve got several cases up there, but they don’t pay me much!’ said the doctor.

‘Up stairs!’ repeated Mr. Precise. ‘What! is there more misery like this here? How many poor creatures live here?’

'All told, I think about eleven hundred!'

Mr. Precise did not speak; he actually gasped with surprise.

While all this was going on, Frank had been at work trying to make an equal division of the stores which he had brought. The wretches seemed grateful for the food and clothes, but many of them grumbled now because no GIN had come with the presents. Such is human gratitude; and this is not the only application where the adage fits, 'the more you give to some, the more they want.'

But others were more grateful. And blessings were asked upon the head of their new benefactor.

In a few moments after the doctor had told Mr. Precise the number of beings in that cavern of poverty and death, the latter recovered from his surprise enough to speak:

'I'll believe you,' said he; 'I'll believe anything now! Send for a carriage, and have that poor woman and her child taken to the hospital; and have the other buried, decently buried! See to this, and send your bill to me.'

'Thank you for your patronage, sir, but I can't get a carriage for her. No driver would take her from here. I can get a hand-cart, and some fellows here that have had it, to draw her!'

'Well, well—anything to make her more comfortable—do what you please! Ah, Frank, you're a good boy! You told the truth! Yes, I'll do well for you, I will; but I'm not rich enough now. I'm agoing into business again.'

'You *are*, sir?'

'Yes, yes, I've got to make more money; for now I know what to do with it.'

'You are *too* good, sir!'

'Oh, no; I'm not half good enough. But let us go around and see more of this.'

'Oh, sir, you've seen enough for to-night. We'll come another time.'

'Well, Francis, you are my guide for this night. I am your elder, yet I will act under your direction.'

'Thank you, sir. You'll not lose by it. But you've been rather unfortunate, losing so much to-night.'

'Oh, no. I have lost money—I've lost a good, regular-going watch; but I've gained a knowledge which will give me more pleasure than aught else I could gain. I know what to do with my money—I know what to do with all I can make hereafter! I've often been a little scared, Francis, at the thought of death, and felt right anxious to know how I could work my passage into Heaven, but now I've learned it. God WILL repay one who devotes all the latter part of a not ill spent life to

relieving such misery as this. Yes, in future I live for the poor—for these wretched, miserable creatures !’

‘Well, sir, as I said before, you are only too good ! But we’ll go from here now. You’ve made a happy set here.’

‘Yes, thank God, yes !’ replied Mr. Precise, as with brimming eyes he turned to gaze upon those whom he had relieved, and then he turned to go.

‘Stop a minute, Francis,’ said he ; ‘did you tell that doctor where we lived ?’

‘Oh, yes, sir ; and that sort of men never forget the address of any one that they can raise change from.’

‘Well, then, I’ll go with you ; but let us go home now, I’m sick of this !’

‘We’ll go, sir, but I’d like to have you step in to Pete’s, and see a little of high-life on the Points.’

‘Where is Pete’s ? Who is he ?’

‘He is one of the upper-ten of darky-dom, sir !’

‘Well, where you please ; I’ll go *any* where now !’

Leaving the doctor to attend the sick family, and the rest enjoying a treat, rich as it was unexpected, the two now retraced their steps through ‘Murderer’s alley,’ and then across to one of the streets beyond the triangular square which centres the sink of misery. Up this they walked but a few steps and paused at a low door, where the inward-passage was downward.

Mr. P. heard the sound of music within, he saw a large negro standing at the door, apparently to guard it.

‘Is this the place ?’ asked he.

‘Yes, sir,’ said Frank, ‘come in, sir !’

But the huge Ethiopian planted himself before the entrance, saying :

‘A shillin’ afore you comes in yah, Massa !’

Mr. Precise felt in his pockets, no shilling was there ; but this lack of ‘tin’ made no difference, for Frank pushed forward, saying :

‘You know me, Sam, I’m on the *cross* !’

Mr. Precise wondered at this strange expression, and still more was he surprised to see the negro step aside and admit them without another word.

And yet wider opened he his eyes when he stepped within. He saw a sight ! Not less than two hundred negroes, of every shade, from the light, mellow-cheeked quadroon, down to the coal-black, were there. Some were dancing to music made by a fiddle, a tambourine, and an exceedingly ancient looking guitar ; all of them played with more strength than sweetness ; and speaking of this latter, the atmosphere was not tinctured with too much of it. Those who were dancing, of course, kept neck and neck with the music : to do so, it was impossible not to sweat some, and the odour raised therefrom

was less agreeable than some of the perfumes which GORAUD has invented.

Mr. Precise saw that those who were not dancing were seated around the room, some smoking, others chewing 'the weed,' still others drinking. The last were supplied by a tall, rather good-looking fellow, behind the bar—whose wife, a very handsome quadroon, was dancing on the floor.

As soon as Mr. Precise entered, a middle sized man—of course a coloured one—came forward to Frank, with a broad grin that showed at least four inches' width of ivory.

'Ah, how d'ye, Masta Frank? Glad to see you down yah, you an dat nice lookin gemplem !'

'This is Pete Williams, the proprietor of this establishment !' said Frank to his master.

The latter bowed, while Pete, bending almost to the sanded floor, said :

'Berry glad to see you, Masta ! De honor ob your 'quaintance be appreciate by me, I sure you ! Walk aroun an' see de ladies !'

Pete was very well dressed; his plaid waistcoat did look rather flashy, and his very rich cravat was too showy for good taste; but he looked better than any of his company.

'Come back and see green-eyed Andy! He's a natural curiosity !' said Frank—'he can palm a die; or slip the loaded ones, better than anybody in this village !'

'I don't understand what you mean,' replied Mr. Precise—'but I'll go where you wish now and see what is to be seen !'

Frank led the way into a back room, where a crowd of darkies were standing before a little table, upon which lay a 'sweat-cloth,' or a square piece of oil-cloth, marked thus :—

1	2	3	4	5	6
---	---	---	---	---	---

Behind this sat an old negro, whose very few hairs were not black; and as each of those who stood in front laid down their bets, he shook up his three dice, and laying them out upon the table, took up all the money which had been placed upon the figures not similar in number to those which he threw. For instance, bets were made upon the one, four, three, and five, he would be sure to turn up his dice two, five, and six, so that one bet only could win, while he took those that lost.

'Why do you call him "green-eyed Andy" asked Mr. Precise, after looking some time intently at the game and also at the negro who shook the dice.

'Because he always wears green specks, sir, I believe. That is all the reason I know. His real name is Andrew.'

'This is gambling, isn't it?'

'Yes, sir. On a *small* scale; not anything large. The "bank" here is worth six or seven dollars, not more!'

'Well, do let us go, there is nothing here which interests me!' said Mr. P., evidently quite disgusted.

The twain now turned to the outer room, where they found that the general dancing had ceased a moment; for a 'juba dancer' was on the floor. He was a young mulatto, and to the liveliest tune which the 'band' could play, he was 'laying it down,' in a dance, where every step in the hornpipe, fling, reel, &c., was brought in; double shuffles, heel and toe tappers, in-and-out winders, pigeon-wings, heel-crackers; and, then, to close up, the richest step of all that ever was danced, the winding-blade was footed.

Mr. Precise paused, and the first expression of admiration which had passed his lips, came then.

'What wonderful agility!' said he—'what astonishing quickness; why, the fellow seems to be made up of hair-springs; he hardly touches the floor!'

But even this ceased, and Mr. P. got out once more amid the wind and sleet of the stormy night, and he and Frank went home.

CHAPTER XI.

READER, stand in the cloak of invisibility with me, and let your imagination paint for you a beautiful boudoir, a lady's chosen sanctum. Richly furnished; its curtains, carpets, ottomans, all of the softest and most voluptuous colours; each little article of *bijouterie* which a wealthy and tasty woman would desire, is there. Pictures, rare and costly, hang upon the curtained walls; the marble tables are covered with books and periodicals. And through a door in its rear can be seen a chamber furnished full as well. Everything in view betokens wealth used with taste; elegance not marred by anything ill-contrasted.

From the windows, however, you may see something which *would* contrast with this; you can see a field of bones—a spot where many a grey and ancient stone tells the last incident in man's history, when and where he, whose dust is beneath, died. Yes, a grave-yard lies almost beneath those windows, and a tall church-steeple towers so high, that its shadows can fall upon the velvet curtains of the window whence you gaze.

One would think it a singular coincidence—but many a premature death, many a broken heart has been caused by deeds done in that house ; and while we look down upon the grassy tombs, we can speak of ruin wrought quite feelingly. You will not understand me unless I write more plainly. On the floor next beneath that where is the boudoir, which we have been looking at, is a gambling hell—a place where more than one young man has been ruined, where the first blow has been struck which brought disgrace upon him ; broken hearts and desolation unto them that loved him.

Yes, one of the most fashionable and one of the vilest of all the hells in Gotham, overlooks a grave-yard.

If, as people once did think, the spirits of the dead can arise at the midnight hour, they could find plenty of company by simply crossing a narrow street ; and they could see all of the passions displayed which are ever felt in the human breast. They could see the drama, comedy, and tragedy of nature ! they could see alternate hope and despair, anger and calmness, fear and courage ; they could see men trying to drown conscience in the burning water of fire ; they could see villains rob villains ; they could see genteel stealing and wholesale robbery, not of money only, but of virtue, principle, aye, of honour, and all that makes the soul of man precious to itself.

We speak of what we have seen ; for many a sickening hour have we spent in studying these scenes. We have gone within these hells—we have marked looks, expressions, and characters, until the book is as one committed to memory, a memory which holdeth all that it has gained.

Why Mr. Henry Carlton, the gambler, should have selected so *fitting* a spot for his hell, we know not ; we only know what too many young men of our city are aware of—that it is *there*.

But we were describing a lady's boudoir ; and though it was so very near the grave-yard, it looked as if it had been fitted for love and happiness ; as if never a thought of death or sorrow should enter there.

In this room see a lady. She is alone. In her hand she holds a letter, and a variety of expressions come and go upon her beautiful face while she reads it. She is pretty : yes, she is more — is *handsome*. Her face possesses intellectual beauty ; her brow is high and fair ; dark blue eyes, glossy brown hair, delicate lashes to shade her large soft eyes, and a face sweetly oval in form ; a figure tall, and perfectly proportioned ; delicately small hands, with jeweled fingers ; a tiny foot, slippered in satin, finishes our brief outline of her appearance.

After reading the letter which she held in her hand, her face beamed with a pleasant smile. She kissed the paper over and over ; then placed it in her throbbing bosom.

'Dear, dear Charles,' she murmured, 'were it death, a thousand deaths to love thee, yet would I be thine. Thou alone of all the millions who tread this ever-changing earth, wert fitted to make me happy. Why we did not meet when we were young and I was free, I cannot divine; nor why a good Heaven sends not congenial spirits together upon the earth, as soon as they are born.'

Then she arose from the ottoman where she had been half-reclining, and drawing one of the worked chairs closer to a side-table whereon lay writing materials, she again murmured:

'I must answer his dear letter—yes, I will meet him as he wishes. I could deny no request of *his*.'

She drew a perfumed sheet of note paper from a drawer, and in a neat, beautiful hand, soon filled its snow-white pages. Then carefully was it folded and sealed.

After this she rang a little silver bell by her side. The outer door opened in a moment, and a middle-aged, fine-looking mulatto woman entered.

'Did you ring, mistress?' she asked.

'Yes, Eliza; take this note to *him*!'

The girl answered only with a look of intelligence—took up the note and left the apartment. In a moment, however, she returned.

'Mr. Sam Selden is in the passage, and wishes to know if you can be seen, madam!' said she.

'Yes,' replied the lady; 'you can tell him to enter; and then, Eliza, hurry away with that note. Tell no one where you are going, and be prudent; it would be worse than death to have my love for *him* known!'

'Fear not, my lady, I never will betray you. I love you too well for that.'

'You are a good, honest, sweet girl, Eliza. You never shall lose by your faithfulness to me.'

The girl left the room once more, and the lady seated herself on an ottoman, in a position of studied carelessness—in a way which best displayed the beauty of her figure, and where the rosy light through a crimson curtain would fall richest upon her cheek.

The next instant a low tap was heard upon the door.

Her voice was very sweet when she cried, 'come in,' and her smile exceedingly bright, as a well dressed gentleman, not much over her own age, entered. He was a little over the middle height, very well proportioned in figure; had a piercingly bright eye of jetty black, deep-set under a rather heavy and frowning brow; hair and beard of glossy silkiness, dark as night when the storm is, and the moon and stars are not. A heavy moustache helped to contrast a very fine set of teeth, which, in smiling, as he met the lady, he took par-

particular pains to show; and his rather pale face looked paler still for the same contrast. His dress was tastefully fashionable and very rich; it fitted his genteel figure perfectly; in fact, Lockwood's establishment never turned out a better suite, and one could almost swear to the 'Dubois cut' of his beautiful frock; his manner, as he entered the apartment was graceful and easy.

'I am glad to see you, Mr. Selden,' said the lady; 'are you well to-day?'

'Quite so, I thank you, madame. I need not ask you the question: you look charmingly this morning. I never saw you look so well.'

'Ah, sir, you are ever fond of flattery; but if I do look well, it is because I am in fine spirits. I feel so happy to-day!'

'Why I thought to find you dull; your husband is absent. Are not married ladies ever sad when their lords are not near?'

'Some may be,' replied the lady, in a careless tone; and then as the thought came over her that Mr. S. was her husband's bosom friend, she added: 'You forget that he is to come home by this evening's boat. He wrote me so three days ago.'

'Yes; yet he will not be here. I received a letter from him this morning, informing me that he could not come before next week.'

'Indeed!' said the lady, in a tone of surprise, while a but half-hidden ray of pleasure lighted her eye.

'Yes, madam,' continued Mr. S., 'and in his letter he sent a bank note of five hundred dollars for you. Here it is.'

'He is ever very kind; but I did not need money. He left me a thousand dollars only ten days ago, and I have not spent half of it yet.' The lady sighed as she spoke of her husband's goodness, and her face seemed a shade paler while she crushed up the bill in her fingers.

Perhaps she was thinking of that sin which even then was lurking in her heart; she was thinking perchance of the wrong which she had meditated upon his rights and honour—even already might have consummated.

This scene and these characters we must now leave for a little time, to return to it and them, of course, in another chapter; for among all of our pictures, the one they are connected with is the wildest and darkest—one which brings in all the strange, fierce passions of the human heart—Love, Hate, Jealousy, Revenge, MURDER.

CHAPTER XII.

Not far from the centre of our city, in a street which runs parallel with Broadway, stands a fine looking three story brick house, with green window blinds in front, which, for some reason or other, are never thrown open. It is a very neat, plain-fronted house; no name is on the door; its number, however, is prominent.

Speaking of its front, reminds us here to say that there is another entrance from a back street. A high fenced alley leads into a back yard in the rear of this dwelling, and many a muffled form, close veiled and trembling with fear and excitement, has hurried through that narrow little lane, and entered that singular house. We will not yet say what this house is—we will let it tell its own story; but we will say that there is not only one, but more than a hundred of its kind in the city.

There always seems to be a kind of mystery about it. No noise or disturbance is ever heard within its walls; it is quiet, still as a convent or a Church. Yet strange monks and nuns would those make who go there.

The very next door neighbour knows not who dwells in this house; the servants of it will not speak to his servants, nor unfold the secret, which is often and vainly sought for. When twilight darkens, and night comes on, many a man is seen to enter, yet they, too, seem to wear a studied disguise—sometimes veiled females are seen to go in at the front door, though nearly all of the visitors to that dwelling have the singular habit of entering by the alley.

We will go in through the second story window, reader; yes, through blinds and all, in our *fancy*, and look at one who is there seated, and who but a moment before had come into the house by the back alley. As he entered the house, he had met a lady, a middle aged, good-looking one was she, and in a low tone had whispered, 'send to Mary, No.———Broadway, and tell her that I *must* speak to her a moment, before she dresses for her usual duties.'

The hour was about five, but as at the season when we write (the early part of January, 1841) darkness comes early, on this occasion it was twilight.

The gentleman, after giving this order, ascended to the second-story front room, which we are now to look at. It was furnished in a magnificent style; red velvet cushions to each chair and sofa; crimson satin curtains to the windows; many fine paintings were hung upon its lofty walls, all of them, however, of the French school, voluptuous—too much so for description here. In an alcove, at one end of this large par-

four, the curtains of a bed could be seen, so that this room could be doubly used as a chamber and a parlour. Upon a table of variegated marble, in the centre of the room, stood a large globe astral lamp, which threw a warm, rich light over it. A cheerful fire—coal of course, gleamed in the grate; and a piano, flanked by a guitar, set off the end of the room opposite to that which contained the alcove.

And now, for one look at the gentleman. He was tall, well formed, elegantly dressed, in that truly tasty style which men of birth and wealth ever adopt.

His age, apparently, was fifty, perhaps not over forty years, his complexion florid and healthful, his features rather fine, yet so formed as to denote a character of great sensuality, And yet, with all, there was an expression of refinement even in his sensuality; he looked very like what we would have deemed the famous Earl of Buckingham to have been at the same age.

Seating himself before the fire, he took some letters from his pocket, and selecting one which had already been opened, he commenced reading it; and as he did so, soliloquized:

‘By the hint which she gives here, I fear that both her and myself are in rather a bad scrape. I like the girl, I would not wish to see her disgraced—nor can I save her, for I am married. I wish that she had known it from the first; it would not now be so hard to break it to her. I once thought that interest alone influenced her, but now it seems that love for me must have led her where she is.

‘If her hint be true, what can I do. There is but one thing. I have heard of a wretch in Greenwich Street, one MADAME SITSILL, who makes a trade of *murder*, who, for a few dollars, will bind herself to destroy *one* life; in doing so often takes *two*. If the worst comes to the worst, I will send Mary to her.

‘The girl writes prettily. Little did I think when six months ago, I met thee, Mary Sheffield, all would have occurred which has. By accident I saw thee, where hundreds before and since have seen thee—standing in thy smiles behind a counter where the ‘weed’ is stored in every shape.’

The gentleman folded up the letter, placed it in his pocket, then looked at his watch.

It is time she was here,’ he muttered impatiently, ‘it is not far—not more than six or seven blocks to her employer’s shop; the servant must have been tardy in delivering my message; I know that Mary would hasten to me, if she knew that I was here.’

Then again he paused, sighed heavily, and gazed steadily into the fire, as if he were reading a lesson from the burning coals; a lesson which would learn him that the fire of the human passions, like the flame before him, would destroy the very fuel on which it feeds.

Whatever may have been his reflections, they were disturbed by a low tap at the door, and without awaiting an answer, the one who touched it entered. It was a female—a young, *beautiful* creature. She could not have been over seventeen or eighteen, judging from her sweet and girlish face; yet a full, perfect bust, such a one as Canova would have given his left eye to have copied, and a figure perfect in all its proportions, were hers. We cannot well describe her, but just fancy one of the prettiest blondes that ever poet idealized or painter pictured, and Mary Sheffield stands before you.

She hurried across the room to the gentleman's side, and clasping her rounded arms about his neck, impressed a warm kiss upon his brow, then while a tear stole down either cheek, murmured :

‘I am so glad, my Albert, to see you once more. Three long days of anxiety have passed since I wrote you. I heard not one word; and much as I have trusted, I began to fear that you, whom I so love, had deceived me !’

‘No, my Mary,’ replied the gentleman ‘I have been absent up the river to Albany, on business. I only received your letter an hour since, and have ever since been cogitating upon its contents. Have you really cause for the hint which it contains of your situation.

The young girl blushed deeply, hung down her head, and in a low tone replied :

‘But too much, sir. Oh ! how unhappy I have been for the last week; but I will be so no more. You will marry me now ?’

‘Mary, I cannot yet. I have reasons which I dare not now reveal. Yet at this time there is a bar between us which will delay our marriage.’

‘Oh ! dear, dear Albert, there must be no bar ! No ! In a few short weeks my situation will be but too apparent; I shall be turned from my place ! I am so well known to every young man in the city, that my name and shame will be bruited everywhere ! Oh ! death, anything, were better than this !’

‘Speak not so, my Mary; I will not so desert you. All that I can do, I will. You shall never say that I deserted you, and left you to the wintry blasts of scorn. I cannot yet take you as my wife; but you shall have a house to live in. I will visit you often, and —’

The girl arose from his knee, where, in childlike fondness, she had seated herself, and while her blue eye flashed with feeling and her red lip quivered, she interrupted him :

‘You would make me your regular favourite—you would more debase me than you have ! Oh, Albert, I have fallen, sinned far worse, far more than Mary the Magdalen ! yet will

I not do this. No. Make me now your wife, as long since you said you would. Do it, if you are a *man* !'

'Mary, I cannot. I will support you ; at all expense, and at all risks, I will preserve you from the danger of your present situation.'

'Albert, do I understand you ? Is not one of the risks at which you hint, the loss of my life ! To comply with that to which you allude, must I not be a murderess !'

'No. Use not such harsh terms, my dear. It is not murder ! Mrs. Sitstill, to whom I would send you, is a kind woman, a very useful one to society. Many a girl from the highest grades of our aristocracy thanks her now, that her name is free from stain.'

'Yes,' cried Mary, 'yes—with a pale cheek, a sunken eye, a broken constitution, and more, far more, the burning fire of conscience, that gnawing worm which never dies—such may live, but must I be one ! Albert Shirley, you could have married me ere this if you would ; but,' and the girl shuddered now, 'I begin to fear that you are like some of the rest of your sex of whom I have heard. You have, like the bee, taken the honey from the flower ; it may droop, fade, and wither, while you buzz on in search of another.'

'Mary, you wrong me. Within two weeks I will satisfy you.'

'Albert, dare I trust you ! And yet I must ; for where can I find redress or aid. I am a helpless female ; if my disgrace should become known, the world would whip me forth into the wilderness of vice ; it would scorn, detest, drive me mad with contempt and insult. He who stole from me my purity—who led me aside with false promises and honeyed words, from the pathway of the good, might still bask in the world's sunshine ; while I, more sinned against than sinning, would be driven, naked of fame and honour, into the gloomy night of helpless misery and despair ! Think you that it is their fault, that hundreds of poor females—young, beautiful creatures—haunt our streets nightly to pursue their revolting, self-sickening calling ? No, sir, it is not ! But who would raise a hand to aid them ? Not even a wall will echo back an answer. They are not worth a breath or a sound !'

With astonishment Mr. Shirley had listened to the rapidly uttered remarks of his strange and beautiful companion ; and they were too true for him to answer.

She did not await a response. But while her cheek was yet red with excitement, and her eyes were flashing through her tears, she turned to leave the room.

'Stay, Mary, stay a moment. When shall I see you again ?'

'I know not, Albert. Never, if you intend still to trifle

with me. I can die alone, as well as with you, if I am not to be your wife !'

'Say that you will spend Sunday afternoon here with me ; I may have good news by that time.'

'I will, Albert ; but I must hurry away now. It is already time that I was in the shop. I must go and stand amid the filthy fumes of smoke—to hear coarse jests made upon my person—to be but a sign to attract coxcombs and dandies to my employer's counter.'

'Poor girl, this shall not long be so !' said the gentleman, in tones where kindness and pity were blended.

'Indeed it shall not—it cannot ! I will not live so ? Sooner, far, would I at once spring into that unknown, which the wicked dread, and even the righteous cannot gaze upon without a tremor.'

And then they parted. The poor girl, muffled closely in her cloak and veil, first hurried from the house by the back alley ; then, ten or twelve minutes after, the gentleman too stole forth from this singular establishment.

CHAPTER XIII.

READERS, we hope you have not forgotten our poor little sewing girl. Though she is of a class that seems entirely to be forgotten by the good people of this city, we claim an exemption for her. The poor creature cannot possibly last long. One winter of destitution—one bitter season of toil amid starvation and wretchedness, must sicken her. If she sickens, she dies ; for then she cannot labour. Were she, scorning the opinions of that world which scorns her poverty, to cast herself into the hot-house of vice, she might get along very well as regards mere food and clothes, for a winter or two ; but let us rather hope to see her freeze, starve, *die* in misery, with purity still in her soul, than to yield to the fatal step which would engulf all that is precious and beautiful in her character.

And do not think that she is a creation of our fancy. We have no need of 'creations' in this work ; the reality is ever before us. Vice, poverty, crime, and wretchedness, are not only every-day words, but every-day sights among us. And whose fault is it ? We cannot say ; but let it be found out.

There are thousands of sewing girls here, whose characters and sufferings are but duplicates of those we attribute to poor Angelina. But leaving her, we will introduce you to another character. She is of that better class of 'the fallen,' known in Paris as the *grisettes* ; here, by no particular name.

Maria Deloraine, must have some evident occupation, some

apparent business, or she could not live in the respectable family where she does; for they, with that spirit of know-everything-ativeness, which is our national character, would be sure to inquire how she got her money—how she managed to dress so neatly and well.

Therefore Maria has chosen the easy and beautiful trade of an embroiderer or worsted-worker, and in this occupation spends all of her leisure hours. We say *leisure* hours, because she had another business than this, one which we will not now name, but which, in the course of our work, shall tell its own story.

She boarded with one Mrs. Windeman, a respectable widow lady, one of that 'class which has seen better days;' but was *reduced*, as she was ever saying, to the unfortunate necessity of keeping a boarding-house. 'Twas dreadful, but it *was*; and though she and her seven maiden daughters, descending from the age of thirty to about twenty, spoke often of the faded glory of former days, when they 'rode in Pa's carriage and lived up town,' they had right hard work to keep up the thread-bare appearance of former gentility.

They lived in a large three story brick-house in Greenwich Street, and kept nearly every class of boarders which they could pick up. But these they managed to classify, as well in rooms and price, as at the table; for a few medical students from the South were mixed up with the daughters at the extreme head of the table when at meals. Below these sat four or five clerks, as the next most genteel; and still farther down, sat some rough looking mechanics—hard working men—who paid their board regularly, dealt honestly, but who, of course, could not be so genteel as the rest, though some of the others seldom found it convenient to 'settle up' with Mrs. W.

Maria never was seen at the table. She had a parlour and bed-room on the second floor; to this her food was carried, and seldem did she make her appearance elsewhere in the house. She passed, with Mrs. W., as an orphan, who had a small income from a legacy left her, and worked at her embroidery for the rest of her means. She saw but little company, and even Mrs. W. and her daughters acknowledged that they were *real* gentlemen who came to see her.

At the time when we introduce her to our reader, she was alone in her parlour, working at a piece of embroidery destined for a chair-back, and though she worked steadily, it did not seem as if her mind was at her employment for she kept ever and anon starting up, looking around and acting as if she expected a visitor.

Nor did it occur that she should be disappointed. The little Irish servant girl, Rosa, came into the room, and said:

'There's a gintleman below, as wants to see you, ma'am—here's a bit o' paper that he guv me, wid his name on't, may be!'

'Yes, it is he;' replied Maria, looking at the card, 'ask Mr. Whitmore to come up!'

The servant disappeared and soon Mr. Whitmore, our old friend, made his entrée.

'Ah, Maria, I am very glad to see you—you look so exceedingly well that I've no occasion to ask after your health!' said he in a familiar tone, at the same time imprinting a kiss upon her cheek, which blushed not at the liberty.

'You are well, too, I see, Harry. It is long since I have seen you. You do not visit No. '355' very often now. Mrs. I. must miss so good a customer as you!' said the young lady.

'I *have* been rather steady of late, I must acknowledge; but I shall make amends by and by. Does she keep up her select soirées yet—those chosen parties, limited to *ten*?'

'Yes, I was there but a few evenings ago. But I received a note from you to-day, Harry, informing me that you would be here at this hour, and that you wished to see me on business. What do you wish?'

'Why, I would like to have you to pass as my sister, with a new acquaintance of mine, a young lady, and also with her brother.'

'What is the object?'

'Oh, a mere whim of mine, my dear girl, a mere fancy. I want her to come here and visit you, and you to go to see her a few times.'

'Were she to come here and ask for a sister of your name, the folks down stairs would open their eyes. There is a difference between the name of Deloraine and Whitmore.'

'That's very true, my dear; didn't think of that. But it can be worked better yet. You shall meet her at Madame I.'s, there is a greater appearance of fashion and wealth there, and they will act as they are directed. The darkie in livery at the door, the elegant furniture, and the fashionable arrangement of the house will be of great advantage to my plan. I can always let you know when she is to call, and when she asks for Miss Maria Whitmore, you can of course be the *she*.'

'Yes, but what is your aim?'

'Why, Maria, if you will have the truth, I wish to make her my wife without committing matrimony according to the rules and forms prescribed by law. Do you understand me?'

'Yes; you wish to ruin her—to bring her also into the fearful ranks of the fallen. Harry Whitmore, I thought that you had made enough victims, more than you wish to answer for, already.'

'Oh, don't go to moralizing, Maria, for heaven's sake!'

'No,' replied the girl bitterly—'no, I am not one now to

moralize ; I know that, but, Harry, this is some poor innocent girl, for whose moral murder you are now laying a deliberate snare.'

'I'll tell you what she is, Maria. She is a pert, forward chit, that is always condemning those who have made a slip ; says that the prison is a sight too good for them, and all that ! She has some beauty ; and is fool enough, I think, to like me some, though I have seen her but twice. I've already told her that I had a sweet sister named Maria, and she is anxious to make the acquaintance.'

'I had rather you would pick out some other accomplice !'

'I know none either so good-looking or so perfectly lady-like as you, Maria. You can make a hundred dollars by carrying on this affair.'

We know not whether the hundred dollars, or the flattery, caused the girl to be less firm in her resistance to his desire, but she replied :

'It's very hard to refuse you anything, Harry ; and if you will promise on your word of honour not to do anything which can get me into trouble, I'll consent.'

'Of course I'll promise that ; and now for arranging the first meeting. I'm to see her again this evening ; and to-morrow I'll send you a note or see you and say when she will pay Miss Whitmore a visit. You must remember to say a great deal about your dear, *dear* brother ; how good he is to you, and all that.'

'You need not fear, sir. When I assume a character, I always sustain it.'

'Very well, Maria, I'll leave all to your good sense. And, by the way, while I think of it, here is a *fifty*. You may need some pocket change.'

'You had better see Mrs. I., and give her a caution, so that there can be no suspicion raised.'

'I will, as I go up the street. And now, my good friend, I'll bid you good evening !'

'Good evening, sir.'

Again Maria Deloraine was alone. She was a very pretty girl, and as Harry had said, exceedingly lady-like in her manners. She was tall, well formed, of a very fair, clear complexion, with black glossy hair ; a fine brow, eye-lashes that dropped entirely over her large black eyes, and could hide them as she looked down at her work. Regular features—a pouting, most kissable pair of lips, and a sweetly dimpled chin, were also hers. Though there was much voluptuousness in her appearance, it was mingled with an air of refinement, which made her doubly dangerous. She was dressed very plain and neatly, as all women may safely do, who have beauty. It is only ugliness or deformity that requires artificial aid to improve upon it.

When Harry Whitmore had left the room, she resumed her work again, and as she stitched away, she murmured out her thoughts in soliloquy :

S o—another flower must be torn and transplanted from the garden of purity to the fields of infamy and death. And I—I, the once pure—must aid in this dark deed. But why should I pause, or think it wrong. I am here—misery loves company.'

CHAPTER XIV.

'I SAY, Cap'n, let's be hoff on a new lay that I've 'ad my peepers on for a month o' Sundays.'

Thus cried little Charley Cooper to Captain Julian Tobin, on the second Sunday night that occurred in our story. Charley, Big Lize, the French Captain, and a new friend to us, but an old one of theirs, called 'the Stutterer,' were all who were present at this time in old Ma'am Buckley's little back room.

As 'the Stutterer' is a new character, and rather an important one, we will give his daguerreotype.

He is of the medium size, not far from forty years of age, is about five feet seven inches high, has dark eyes and hair, the latter curling and worn long. He dresses very well, but rather flashily; has a dark complexion; frowns when speaking, especially when stuttering badly, which he does when he gets very excited. He has the bad habit of swearing a great deal; and once or twice a year takes a trip over to England to see how his friends get along there.

But back again to the subject. Captain Tobin heard the proposition of little Charley, and taking out a very handsome watch, the identical one which he had *borrowed* of Mr. Precise, he glanced at it and replied :

'Vere is ze lay—vat shall be ze speculatione, eh ?'

'The Dutch dance-house,' replied Charley. 'There's a lot o' swells as has got to goin' there lately to dance with the Dutch g'hals, and we might do up a job or two of a night, that 'ud pay right fair.'

'Vel, ve shall see, ver soon—direcklee. Zere is an engagement zat I expect in some sree or four minute, zen I will go an see vat is out.'

'Wh-who d'ye 'spect, Cap cap'n ?' asked the Stutterer.

'Zat dam lawyare, Messieur Tarhound; he is employ to for me some dam leetle dirty shob, and I must wait for see him till it is eight o'clock.'

I'll just t-tell you wh-what it is, Cap'n, it's my private ho-

pinion, purty d—d hopenly hexpressed, that th-that Tarhound is a devilish mean r-r-rascal. He'd steal from a *thief*!

The Captain was about to reply, when the very individual alluded to verified the old adage—'speak of the devil and he's sure to appear'—by walking in.

He was a little over the medium height, well formed, dressed shabby-genteel—had hard hazel eyes, straight black hair, worn long over his ears, as if to hide some mark there. His face had a kind of *sheneyish* expression, in which avarice, cunning, cowardice, and licentiousness were all so mixed together that they could not be separated. Although he vegetated under the name of *C. Agrippa Tarhound, Esquire*, the legal gentleman had no particular office, nor hung he out 'a shingle' anywhere. His clients were generally to be found in or about the edges of the 'Points,' except when he could get hold of some poor woman or green countryman, whose sorrowful faces as they approached the 'Tombs,' showed them to be in trouble; and then, if by either personating himself or by *assuming* the name of some better known lawyer, he could get a fee out of them, he would do it, *of course*. We have a pleasant anecdote or two concerning this interesting character, which we will work in hereafter—one especially regarding a 'will' and his first débüt in Jersey, which is immeasurably *rich*. He is known only as one of the 'Tombs' lawyers,' and as he stands at the head of his peculiar grade, we give him a place in our romance.

When he entered the room and saw the company which we have described, he made a low, cringing bow to each, and, in a kind of fawning tone, said:

'I'm very glad to see you, *gentlemen*; glad to see you, *Miss Eliza, very.*'

'Sorry I can't return the compliment. Next to a copper, a lawyer is what I hates the worst, 'specially a poor'un.'

Tarhound's brow, red and liquor-stained before, grew a little purpleish at this; but the captain interfered, and said:

'Nevare mind ze lady, sir, she is ver fond of speak in ze sarcastique; but we shall talk of ze biznasse. Vat 'ave you do for zem dam boys, eh?'

'Got a hearing—get 'em out in the morning, Captain. Straw bail, and all that. It'll cost *something*, though.'

'How, great deal?'

'About a double X, for paying the bail and my fees.'

'I shall give you ze monee. But, *Messieur Tarhound*, if ze dam leetle boys be not go free before noon to-morrow, I shall give you one case again nevare.'

'Don't fear, sir. I'd have 'em out if old Matsell himself was to examine them.'

'Ah, dam zat *Messieur Matsell*; if he was deat, zen would

ze gno 'ave one grand shubilee—one ver fine holiday !' said the French Captain ; and then he asked :

'Who shall 'ave ze honare of examine ze little boys?'

'Old Deserve, to be sure, and I can stuff him with anything. Why, he thinks I'm one of the best lawyers at the bar !'

'Then it's my hopinion th-that he can be most b-b-blastedly s-st-stuffed,' said the stutterer, quietly, while Big Lize asked :

'What's the kids in for, old fuddle-cap?'

'I don't like your complimentary terms, Miss Eliza,' replied T. ; 'but I'll answer the question. The youngsters are in for till-tapping. A Froglander grocery-keeper caught one of 'em with his hands in the money-till ; his pall didn't keep his peepers open.'

'The bigger fool he. Will they have to visit the Island?'

'No, not while C. Aggrippa Tarhound is retained for them. I never let my clients go there if they fork up handsomely.'

'C-ceptin' when you gets dr-drunk on the money and f-f-forget th-the case t-till they're sentenced, as you d-did with Sal Snow, th-the Micky Riley g'hal.'

'I wasn't drunk, Mr. H., I was only *sick*,' replied the lawyer, quite indignant at the Stutterer's insinuation.

'Vel, sare, it is not mattare now ; zere is your twenty dollare ; tell zem dam leetle rascale boys zat zey must not get grab any more, or by dam I will let zem go to ze devile ; yes, my *dam*, I will !'

The lawyer liked his company very well, but he had sense enough to see that they didn't like him ; therefore he made his exit.

'Now, Sharlee, I vil go viz you on zat ozzare lay, but we do not want many of ze boys, eh?' said Captain Tobin to little Charley.

'No,' replied the pickpocket. 'Lize will pal for me ; the Stutterer shall pal for you. Lize is the best bulk that a file ever knucked after ; and we'll go there for an hour, and then come home and take a peep at the swag we both 'ave lifted.'

'Vel, sare, *tramp* is ze word.' And with this the worthies bent their way to Elizabeth-street near Grand, where is still to be seen one of *the* sights in Gotham. Separating, and keeping on the shady sides of the streets, the select party of four started for their field of labour.

PART SECOND.

CHAPTER I.

THERE were many sad, and very few bright scenes in our last part; we will endeavour to commence this less gloomily. Fancy is a kind creature, reader; an angel of the mind, which often ministers sunshine when the clouds of reality are around us.

Let her take you to a house on the Third avenue, where every sign of wealth and elegance is visible, externally and internally. You may have seen some of the up-town palaces of our merchant-kings, *kings* we say, because wealth makes power here; if so, I need not trouble you with the description, or myself with writing it.

In her chamber sat a mother—a sweet, lovely creature was she—her age could not be over twenty, and yet a bright-eyed child of at least four summers' blossoming, sat in her lap. Her eyes were dark blue, and that boy looked up at her with eyes blue as the shadowed ocean, and liquid too with affection were they, as is the bedewed violet's cup, when its slender stem is bent at the early dawn to greet the sun-rise. His chubby little face was set in a frame of golden curls, and she twined her fair fingers amid the silken tresses, and gazed down upon him with a fond pride—only to be felt by a young, happy mother, who looks upon her idolized first-born.

The child was playing with one of her soft brown ringlets that dropped within his reach, escaping from a cluster which lay thick upon her snowy shoulders, and prattling in that sweet broken tongue which none but infants learning first to imitate their parents' words can speak.

The door of the chamber opened, and a young man, perchance of twenty-six or eight years, entered. He was about the middle height, well formed, and wore the unmistakable look of a gentleman. A glance at his light brown hair and clear blue eyes at once showed the relation which he held to the cherub we have described.

'*Dear Annie!*' said the gentleman, as he entered, and with a hasty step he crossed the carpet and folding his arms around her and his boy, kissed his young wife tenderly.

And she—the beautiful mother, looked up and kissed his

fair high brow and murmured :—‘ My *own* dear Edward !’ in tones that spoke her fondness. They were the deep-voiced echoes of a full, true heart.

And the little cherub too raised his pouting mouth and lisped—‘ Give Willie a kiss too, Papa !’

‘ Yes, my boy, yes !’ and while the father raised his child in his arms, he said to her who bore it—

‘ Oh my Annie, you have made me but too, *too* happy. I often fear that we who are now so blessed will yet feel the touch of sorrow, for in life as with the elements—it cannot always be sunlight. The storm may, the night *must* come.’

‘ But, dearest, should it, are we not together ? You have borne prosperity well, you have a firmness and energy that will never fail you when misfortune comes. It is easier for a true man to bear adversity, than for a bad one to bear prosperity. To some, misfortune is necessary ; as with the grape, they must be crushed ere the true essence of the character, the strong spirit of the *man* is expressed.’

‘ Yes, Annie—I could breast the storm, but for you, for our child should I tremble.’

‘ Are we not so linked together, Edward, that each to the other will be a support—even as the thick growing trees of the forest aid each other to withstand the blast ?’

‘ True, dear one, we are linked together—yet as is the oak to the vine which clings around it, am I to you ; as the budding rose which starts from the sod beneath, is our child to us both. The bud may easily be crushed, the vine may be torn from the oak, and yet the strong tree survive them both.’

The large eyes of the young wife filled with tears. ‘ Let us not talk so sadly,’ she murmured, ‘ let us not paint for ourselves a clouded sky—but wait till it comes.’

‘ We will change the subject,’ replied he—‘ but yet it is best sometimes to think of that which may be, for then we will be the better prepared for it when it comes.’

‘ True, dear one, but I will sing you a song now and that will remind us of the past, which is even as dear to us as the present. I will sing you your *own*—the one you used to sing to me when we were first wedded.’

Leaving the boy in his father’s arms, the young wife passed across the room and taking up a guitar which stood carelessly in a corner, returned to her seat, tuned it and sung in a low deep voice, which seemed to fill the room with soulful melody—

THE SONG OF THE HEART.

A pure heart and a peaceful mind
And a soul above despair,
Which upward looks and leaves behind
The heavy clouds of care ;

And a dear wife smiling nigh
 With her baby by her side :
 Oh, that is the life I'd choose,
 Of all the world beside.

“ Oh, for a life that's wild and free,”
 A thoughtless one may cry ;
 But give a life of peace to me,
 A clear and cloudless sky,
 And a lov'd one smiling nigh,
 My comfort and my pride,
 Oh, that is the life I'd choose
 Of all the world beside.

There are tempests loud and high
 And sorrows ever near,
 But the star of hope is in the sky
 To light our pathway here,
 Then we'll let the tempests blow
 And let the troubles come,
 The lamp of love will brightly glow
 With light where'er we roam.

She ceased, and yet it seemed as if the echoes of her voice dwelt still in the room, even as if they *could* not die, for her smiles,—her looks of love were still the same—and these were reflected in the face of her husband and his boy.

Oh, why should ever a cloud come over their joy? And how could it? Edward Abingdon was rich, respected by all who knew him, beloved by a devoted wife. His fortune was not invested in stocks, or in those gambling schemes and lotteries of speculation which are as uncertain as the caprices of a coquette; therefore poverty could not well approach him. He had not even trusted to a ‘Bank,’ which, with such fate as *has been*, might break, or be robbed by its officers, or the more honourable burglar. He had fifty thousand dollars in cash there in that house; he owned a block of buildings—the very block of which his dwelling made one. These, with their rent, gave him a princely income on which to live and to entertain his cherished friends.

But we will now leave him and his, to turn to other scenes which must be woven in our web.

Harry Whitmore sat by the side of Isabella Meadows. Her down-cast look—her blushing cheeks told not that he was saying aught improper to her. Had his intentions been pure and honourable he was not speaking one word that she should blush for—yet he, the heartless villain, was breathing vows to her which he neither intended to fulfil or even felt—he was telling her that she had won the first pure love of his heart, praying her not only to give him her affection but her hand.

She blushed ; for this was the first time that her ears had even listened to words like these ; never before had her heart known that gush of sympathy which is felt by that which knows it is beloved.

His words where not displeasing to her, for she who had seen so little of the ways of the world was indeed struck with his fine *personalle*, his plausible and agreeable manners, and his apparent devotion to her. He was so fond of her brother, too, that she could scarcely help loving him. Therefore, though her eyes were downcast and her head slightly turned away, Harry knew that in winning her love, at least, his success was certain. He saw that in either eye a tear glittered beneath the drooping lashes, he noticed that her red lips quivered, and her bosom heaved, though she did not speak. But he was not satisfied with this proof of her feelings. Again he repeated his last declaration :

‘Dear Isabella, I have laid open my very heart to you ; I have told you that your goodness more than your beauty has won from me a love as pure as it is fervent. Will you not reply—will you not bid me hope for a return ?’

‘Oh, Harry—*dear* Harry ! how can I speak ?’ murmured the fair girl—and tears, great bright tears, rushed down her cheeks, as the dew from the full blown rose when its stem is shook.

Harry let go of the waist ribbon which he had been carelessly toying with, and clasped her graceful form to his breast while he imprinted kiss after kiss on her sweet lips. She blushed yet deeper, and faintly struggled to free her form from his passionate embrace, but it would have been plain to a less knowing man than Harry Whitmore, that her struggles were only dictated by an innate sense of propriety, not by her own natural inclinations.

But at last, even his ardour, as mere passion’s ardour ever does, cooled off, and he used his lips once more for speaking.

‘I now know that you *love* me, Isabella, and I am happy,’ said he—‘happy to a certain degree, but I shall never be completely so until you are mine entirely, hand as well as heart !’

She was about to speak, but he continued :

‘I know not when this can be exactly, for we shall have one powerful opponent. My mother, upon whom I depend, is a very set woman, and she wishes me to marry a wealthy girl of her own choosing. She would disinherit me and cast me off for ever were I openly, and at once, to wed against her will.’

‘Why should she object to me. There is not one breath in all the world which can stain my character.’

‘I know that well, dear Isabella, but my mother is a very strange woman. It is to our interest, dear one, not to offend her.’

'I don't wish to, Harry—no, not to attain happiness for myself. I am yours, at your own time!'

'Aye, and in my own way,' said the heartless wretch, in a tone too low for her to hear, and then he added: 'it will not be long, dear one. My sweet sister shall use her influence. Maria has heard of you so often through me, that she already knows and loves you. You must indeed see her, and to day.'

'Whenever you like, Harry. I have now no will but yours.' 'She comes into the traces right handsomely,' muttered Harry again, and then while he imprinted another burning, passionate kiss on her pure lips, he said:

'I must leave you for a brief time, sweet one. I shall return within two or three hours, and then you shall visit my sister. If Charles comes home while I am out, tell him I will join him this evening as he desired; and by the way, Isabella, say nothing of our late conversation to him or to your mother. At a proper time I will break it to both of them!'

'It shall be as you wish,' responded the young girl, but she wondered much why he should wish to keep this news from her only relatives. Her young heart was so full of joy that she wished to pour its over-running into the bosoms of those whom she loved. She yearned to tell her dear good mother that she *loved*, was *beloved*, and felt too happy for utterance.

But for his sake, and regarding alone his wishes, she restrained herself.

Again he kissed her, and then arose and left her side.

He had not gone ten steps from the door, when he met his shadow, Gustave Livingston.

'I was just coming to find you, Harry; got some capital news for you!' cried the latter, as he met our arch villain.

'Well, Gus, out with it!'

'You remember the little mink that we tossed up for in front of Florence's, don't you?'

'Yes, the sewing girl, you mean. I ought to remember her, when I got knocked down for her.'

'I know where she is—where she lives!'

'Well, what of it?'

'You seem rather cool about it—I suppose you won't even thank me for my information.'

'I shall not—I've better game afoot than her!'

'Then you're willing to give her up to me?'

'Certainly. I don't want to see the dowdy thing again. If I hadn't been a little tipsy I should have never looked at her!'

'She's the prettiest girl I ever saw in Gotham!'

'What! prettier than my 'Bella? It is impossible.'

'It is true—but, speaking of her, how goes on the game? Are you likely to win?'

'Of course. Did you ever know me to lose in such a game? Did I ever lay my eyes on fruit which I failed to taste?'

'Ah, Harry, you're a sad dog—a demnition sad dog. Which way were you steering when I met you?'

'Down to Greenwich street to see Maria. I've got to arrange matters for Isabella to meet my *sister*.'

'*Your* sister! Ha Ha! a demed good joke! Rich, exceedingly!'

'It will be if it is well carried through, but I must hurry along. I've no time to waste, for I've got to introduce Isabella, and then to return in time to meet Charley, and go with him to Carlton's. They can skin him better there than at Pat's. Pat will be a gentleman in spite of his profession and hasn't the heart to quite ruin a poor devil like Charley but they'll do him up in the other place.'

'I shouldn't wonder if they did, for that genteel and polished scoundrel, Sam Selden, deals pretty often, and "Butcher Bill" is always on hand for a look-out and adviser.'

'Well, meet me there at ten to-night, and we'll see what we can make. Carlton promises halves.'

'I'll be there,' replied Gus, and then the two separated, one to prepare to ruin the pure and unsuspecting Isabella, the other, to persecute our poor Angelina. *Poor*, we said yes, that girl is poor in all things save virtue, patience and industry. We will soon pay her a visit, and in the meantime will take a cruise to Mr. Jack Circle's den, and see how the burglars are getting along.

CHAPTER II.

ONCE more in the upper back room of the crib, known in our first part as Jack Circle's, and located in Cherry street near the Catherine Market.

Jack is there in all his glory, for he has a large party of his gang around him, who have come to report the labours of the past week, and to cut out new work for the next. Bill Hoppy, Bob Sutton, Black Bill and many others of our old friends are there. In the darkest corner, by the side of Harriet Circle, stands a young man dressed very neatly in black, whom the reader will recognise, because he is making love in most poetic language to the *lady*. It is none other than Frank Hennock. He was just in the middle of Romeo's garden address to Juliet, which he was slightly altering to suit Harriet's circumstances, when the meeting was called to order by Mr. Circle, who cried:

'Vel, my covies, ve might as vel perceed to business'

Frank, my kiddy, vot 'ave you done in the vay of that 'ere lay I put you on.'

'Not much as yet, Captain Jack!' replied the young hopeful. 'I borrowed this five hundred from the old gentleman the other night at the Points,' and the young villain handed over the pocket-book of Mr. Precise, from which he had taken the odd eleven dollars, to leave even hundreds.

Jack's eyes sparkled as he opened the dummy and looked at its contents. 'Vy, my kiddy, you *is* one of the b'hoys, sure! You've paid your veeek's hexpenses and summat more for yerself! 'Ows the old 'un's crib?'

'It would be very easily cracked—but I think we'd better hold on awhile!'

'Vy, vots in the vay now?'

'Nothing in the way, only the prospect of a little heavier haul if we wait!'

'Jest 'ave the kindness to hexplain yerself, younker, ve doesn't deal in riddles.'

'Why, my new master is expecting a fortune over from England very soon. He comes by his mother's side from the celebrated Hunt family, and the lawyers have hunted him up and only a little more proof is wanting to give him a whole million of bright dollars.'

All the party now gathered up closer to Frank and listened with deep interest to his remarks.

'Ow did you find out all o' this?' asked Jack.

'By the letters he receives and which I have to answer. Of course I know all his secrets, being his private secretary.'

'Vel, my kiddy, ve'll see vots best. If there's a show for more than he's got now, ve'd better vait for it, for ve're a doin very vel on our other lays.'

'Aye, and ve'll do better yet on a new von as I've clapped my peepers on!' cried Jack Shaw, giving a very knowing leer with his squint eye.

'Vot is it, Jack?' asked old Circle—'You're allers on 'and, with somethin' rich!'

'Vel if we gets into the crib that I was pattering about, we'll make one of *the* hauls, but it's rather a tight place—got alarm bells, big dog and all that!'

'If it's got the swag in it, that's hall that ve asks!' said Bill Hoppy.

'Vel, it *has*, Bill, but 'ow about that ere gospel shop as you was agoin for to crack last week?' replied Shaw.

'All right as a trivet, my cove—took the pewter and old Jack smashed it for us.'

'Yes,' replied old Circle, 'Ven ve counts up you'll see 'ow I've done it up. But 'ow about that 'ere Boston lay?'

Black Bill, to whom this question was propounded, replied:

'It vont do yet. I sent on to have the screws fitted, and

somethin's leaked out, for they've put a glim inside and two he fellers and a dog. People is a gettin bright now a days; afore long a cracksman vont 'ave no more chance than a stump-tailed cow in fly time.'

'That's a gospel fact,' sighed Harriet, and she was about to say more when three double taps were heard at the door signifying that some of the gang wished admittance.

'Let 'em in, 'Arriet, my gal !' said old Circle.

Harriet obeyed, and two persons entered. One was a tall, dark complexioned, shrewd looking fellow, in whose jet black eyes could be seen the fire of villany and deep cunning. His arched eye-brows, aquiline nose, thin lips and curling black hair, all bespoke him a native of a foreign soil. In fact, he looked like a gipsy, or an Italian.

A woman was with him, and her features were so like his, that any one would know them to be brother and sister. She was younger and more delicate than he; rather pretty, and dressed very neatly and well. The man looked to be about thirty-five or forty years of age; he too was genteelly dressed.

As he entered he spoke, his accent also being evidence of his foreign derivation,

'All here, I see, Captain !' said he.

'Aye. 'Ow d'ye Genlis ! 'ow's your sister ! and 'ow goes on fortin telling ?'

'Well,' replied the man, 'fools are more plenty here than in Europe, but they don't pay as well. I'm about to try a large game, however !'

'Vot's that? Pad your limber and let's ear vot it is !'

'Why I've got my eye on a child who shall make at least a hundred thousand dollars for us, in one way or another !'

'A kid? I don't understand you !'

'Well, I'll explain. I know a young married couple who are very rich. They have a child which they idolize. That child shall be stolen; by opportune hints, when they are driven to despair at its loss, they shall hear of Genlis the Gipsey fortune teller. They'll pay well to see their lost one, if it is only in my magic looking-glass. Then in one way or another, we'll skin them till they are worth a little less than nothing !'

'It 'll be a great lay, if the game's fat,, replied old Jack. 'Is it a goldfinch ?'

'Fifty thousand, hard dust ; more coming in every day and plenty of plate !' replied the Gipsey.

'Vere is it ?' asked Jack Shaw, who had been listening to the words of Genlis.

'That's telling, my cove, I always keep dark when I don't want a pal, and my sister is all I need on this lay !' replied the Gipsey, casting a rather distrustful glance at the burglar.

'I honly axed caze I thought you'd spotted a crib that I

'ad my own peepers on up in the Third avenue,' replied the thief, carelessly, but at the same time his keen eye was fixed upon the Gipsy's face, which for a moment wore an expression of surprise.

'Will you tell me the name of the family you mean?' asked Genlis.

'That 'ud be telling,' replied the fellow, with a coarse laugh, at the idea of turning the tables on his non-communicative companion, and then he added: 'I'd like to 'ave the dust that all that ere row of 'houses would bring!'

'A row of houses! he certainly knows the place,' said Genlis, in a low tone, then turning to Jack, he added—'If you've spotted the crib, Jack, I'll go you halves if I have my own way.'

'D'ye think I'm sich a bloody noddy as all that 'ud come to?' replied the burglar. 'Why, I've got two doors fitted now in the crib; it would'nt take me a month o' Sundays to do the rest, and go nobody halves.'

'But I'll make more out of him than he's got in his safe, if it is Mr. Abingdon that you mean!'

'Vel, you 'ave hit it!' cried the burglar—'I thought ve vos on the same lay. Now ve can harrange the business!'

Leaving Jack Circle and his crowd for a little while to fix and arrange their matters, we will take a glance at some of our other characters.

CHAPTER III.

THE widowed mother of Angelina, our poor sewing girl, sat alone in her cellar. A cheerful fire was burning before her; there was food upon the barrel-table, by which she had been at work. The night was just setting in, but the bright fire-light precluded the necessity of a candle, especially as the old lady was not sewing.

She had a glad expression on her worn and wasted countenance; it seemed to be as much a stranger there too, as a tear would be upon a stern warrior's check. She was soliloquizing, and as she spoke, she shook silver in her hand, as a kind of accompaniment to her words.

'God is good!' she said. 'It is strange why this good young man should take so much interest in me, who are so poor, who beforetime have been neglected by all. He gave me five dollars in bright silver, and sent me food and fuel, and says I shall no longer live in a cellar. How good and noble he is. Angelina will be so happy when she comes—for now the poor girl can rest.'

At this moment, the of whom the mother spoke, entered.

He little hood and shawl were both spotted over with the snow which was falling outside, and the long curls of her hair were filled with the large flakes. She staggered as she entered, and tottered over to the bed whereon she half reclined, and murmured :

‘Give me some water, dear mother—I am very weary, and my head aches with a deep and throbbing pain, which dims my eyesight. My cheeks burn, feel how hot they are, and yet it is cold in the air.’ The poor girl closed her eyes, and sunk back still more.

The mother hastily took up a bottle which stood by the food, and pouring out some of its contents into a broken tea-cup, hurried to her daughter’s side, raised her head, and after removing her hood, held the cup to her lips.

‘Drink, my poor child, drink; it will do you good!’ said she, tenderly.

The young girl opened her lips, but as she took one swallow of the draught, she raised her head, and looking her mother in the face with a wondering eye, said—

‘That is not water, mother!’

‘No, my child, it is wine. Drink it, it will make you strong; I drank some before you came, and feel so smart now!’

‘Wine, mother? I have heard that rich people drank wine—how did you get any?’

‘A good young man came here just after you went down to the store with the finished work, and he seemed to feel so much for us. He brought me some food and wood, and gave me five dollars in money!’

‘What for, mother? Did he want work?’

‘No, child, no. He was rich, and he had a gentle heart. He saw our poverty, and you see how kind he has been.’

The girl looked at the food, the cheerful fire, and then her large blue eyes filled with tears.

‘For your sake I am very glad, mother!’ she murmured.

‘For my sake, child? Why not for your own, too?’

‘Because I shall not stay long, mother, to see it. I have had a fever for more than a week, and it is killing me.’

‘Oh, no, dear, dear child!’ cried the mother—‘it is not, cannot be so. Here, take some of this wine, you will soon feel better!’

‘I’d rather have water, mother—the wine burns my lips, and they are too hot now!’

‘You shall have it, poor dear. Yes, your cheeks are hot and red, too, as roses!’

The good mother hurried to the broken pitcher which stood beside the work-table, and brought it to her daughter. The girl took a long draught from the pitcher, and then murmured :

‘Pour out a little in your hand, mother, and put it upon my forehead, for my head aches dreadfully!’

The parent did as she was desired. With her thin hands she laved the pale brow of her sick child, and pushed back the golden tresses for fear of wetting and dimming their glossiness, for, indeed, they were beautiful.

As the poor girl revived more, she reached out her hand, which she had kept close clenched until now, and said:

‘There is the dollar for our last three days’ work, mother. I’m glad you have more—but this we *earned*.’

There was a faint tone of pride in her voice as she spoke. That tone seemed almost like a rebuke to her mother for having accepted charity, but the latter heeded it not, for she said:

‘That dollar will buy you a pair of shoes, dear, the ones you have on are entirely worn out, and we have money enough to rest now for a whole week at least!’

‘I’d rather do something else with the dollar, mother, if you’ll give it to me!’

‘What, my child? Surely you need shoes more than anything else.’

‘I can do without them, mother, but the ring that my poor father gave to me when he was dying, we pawned it, you know, for a dollar, and I have never been happy since. It had his coat of arms on it, and he told me never to lose it, for by it we might find our uncle out if ever he came back from England.’

‘True, child, but we’ve been so poor I had forgotten that.’

‘I never have, mother. I’d like to see my uncle before I die.’

‘Oh don’t talk of dying, child, my heart is half broken now; don’t speak of dying!’ and the mother burst into a flood of tears.

The angel daughter drew her mother’s head down upon her bosom and kissed her eyes, while she said soothingly:

‘Don’t cry, dear mother, I’ll not speak of death again—I’ll try not to think of it!’

Then as the mother became once more calm, she added:

‘Uncle had a daughter—my cousin, hadn’t he?’

‘Yes, child, but she was very bad and almost broke his heart. He killed her seducer and fled to England. I have never heard of him since!’

‘Where is *she*—his daughter?’

‘I don’t know, dear. I once heard that she was living a terrible life, but I wouldn’t believe it. I should rather have hoped that she was dead.’

‘Dead, mother?’

‘Yes, child; rather than see *you*, where I last heard she

was, I would pray God to let you die. I would rather close your eyes for the last time, than open mine to see your infamy.

‘Don’t talk so, mother. You need never fear for your child. She can die, but she will never do wrong.’

‘I know it, dear one—but won’t you try and eat some? I have waited all this time for you to come home to eat with me.’

‘I cannot eat, mother; I am not hungry now. Oh, I would like to sleep, for my head aches *so* hard!’

‘You shall, child, you shall, but not quite yet, for that good young gentleman is coming back again to see us to-night, to tell me where he will find us a better room than this!’

‘What makes him so kind, mother?’

‘His good heart, I suppose, child; what foolish questions you do ask!’

Not so foolish as the mother thought was that young girl’s question. She had lived long enough in this all-selfish world of ours to know that few good acts are performed without some self interested cause: though we will do the *few* justice who act without selfishness. They are as angel visitants upon the earth, ‘few and far between.’

Immediately after the mother had responded to Angelina’s question, a tap was heard at the door, and while the daughter arose from the bed and took off her shawl, the mother hastened to open the door.

When she did so, a person who stood outside, close muffled in a cloak, entered. As he did so, and opened his cloak, the old lady exclaimed:

‘I thought it was he. This, Angelina, dear, is our benefactor!’

Angelina had started to her feet, and when she did, her fever-hued cheeks and excited eyes gave her an almost supernatural beauty; but when she glanced at him who entered, her colour faded—she bent down her head and hid her face.

‘What is the matter, child? Why do you not look up and speak?’ asked the mother. This is the gentleman, dear, who has been so kind to us?’

‘Oh, mother, I have seen him before. He was one of those who insulted me on that dreadful night, when I ran all the way home!’

The mother had no time to speak, for *Gus. Livingston* stepped forward and said:

‘It is true, madam, that I met your beautiful daughter when I was rather the worse of liquor. But I did not know how good and pure she was, or I would rather have died than injured her.’

He said this in a tone so kind and earnest, that the mother was completely won over to his side.

'I am sure you would'nt, sir,' said she, 'I know that you are too good-hearted to do her any harm, who never has harmed you.'

'Indeed, I hope I am, madam. That I once had a share in frightening her, is true, but I offer a humble apology; and to prove that I am your friend and her's rather than an enemy, I have come to say that you will find a large furnished room engaged in a house, No. — Leight street, to which you can move in the morning. The room is paid for a month in advance, and here is ten dollars more to settle up with here, and to move you.'

'God bless you for your kindness, sir,' said the old lady, 'you are too generous. I do not need half so much. I owe nothing here except this week's rent, one dollar!' and the old lady tried to hand him back the golden eagle which he had placed in her hand.

'No, no, my good madam, no, keep it!' said he, 'you are clothed but too scantily for the season, keep it for your necessities. You are poor, I am rich, compared with you, keep it for my sake!'

The widow wept, while she consigned it to woman's usual pocket—that formed by the portion of her dress which covers her heart, we mean—and then she remembered that she had not asked the gentleman to sit down. She hurriedly wiped the seat of one of the low stools with the skirt of her dress, and placing it before the fire, asked him to occupy it.

'No, no, my kind madam,' said Gus, with a patronizing air, 'I only called to let you know where I had secured a better lodging for you; but I am sorry that your sweet daughter seems so unforgiving.'

'Oh, she is not so, sir. The poor girl is sick and fretful. You will find her grateful, sir, indeed you will, when you meet us again.'

'I hope that she will be less sad and more forgiving than now, at least!' replied Livingston, while he fixed his burning glance upon her as she sat, still pale and trembling, upon the bedside.

'Oh, she will be, indeed, sir, forgive her to night. The poor girl is feverish. She has worked so hard all this fall and winter!'

'Poor creature, I pity her, indeed I do. She shall not again suffer so much!' said Gus, and both his look and tones were full of sympathy.

Angelina still sat with her head bent down, and her cheeks were yet pale. Livingston evidently saw that he could make no headway on that evening, and after giving the widow the number of the room which he had engaged for her, and the re-

ceipt for its rent, he took his leave, promising to visit her in her new quarters on the next evening.

‘Why did you act so coldly, Angelina, to the gentleman? I’ve a great mind to be angry—to be very angry with you, child!’ said the widow, when herself and daughter were left alone. Her tone was stern, far more so than usual.

Angelina burst into tears.

‘Oh, mother, it is hard to hear you speak so harshly. That man means no good for all his kindness. I see it all now, you will but too soon!’

‘Oh, tush, child! You are too suspicious. What could induce him to act selfishly?’

‘Too much, mother. I am young, and to my misfortune, they think me beautiful!’

‘They’re right, child! You are pretty, though you are my daughter, and I say it. You are very handsome. Who knows but what this noble young gentleman will fall in love with you and marry you?’

‘Marry me, mother? *He* marry me! Oh, little do you know of him or his class, if you think he would marry me. The snake charms the bird to destroy the fledgling in its nest. He is the snake, you are the bird, I am the fledgling.’

‘Oh, tush, child! You speak in riddles. But your cheeks are flushed up with the fever again; you had better go to bed!’

‘I will, mother, after I have prayed God to care for us in this new danger!’

‘Well, child. We will sleep early to-night, that we may rise soon in the morning and go to a better room. But I *must* eat, I’m very hungry.’

‘Do not wait for me, mother, I am hungry no more!’ and the daughter with this sank to her knees by the side of the little cot, while the mother seated herself to her cold supper.

CHAPTER IV.

THE reader remembers that hell which we described as being appropriately situated, in that it overlooked a grave-yard. We will give him now a scene within that place, and show him some of the demons who there do congregate.

We will pass by the supper table; we will not even glance at the rich paintings and costly furniture, but will at once take a place before the gambler’s altar—the *faro* table.

Look at the two most important personages behind it; the banker and the dealer. The first, is a man of middle size, slender, well formed, and very genteelly apparelled. He has a blue eye, regular features, light brown hair, and a still

lighter beard and moustache. His face is very pale, and there is an expression of care and anxiety upon it, which speaks of some hidden sadness. He sits upon the right hand of the dealer, and attends to the cashing of checks, and the checking of cash.

He is no other than the husband of the lady whom we have described as dwelling in the suite of rooms above—Mr. Henry Carlton.

Now, for one glance at the dealer. You have seen Mr. Sam Selden before, and in the very chapter which described this place. He is now in his glory, for the faro box is in his hands, and verdant victims are before him—but his look is cold and careless, for they are but a picayune set, who are playing; young clerks, and boys who are only losing their pocket money. To win this, is only to keep up the game, till something better turns up.

But see! the cold looks of Mr. Selden melts into a sweet and fascinating smile; his dark eyes flash with pleasure, and in a low whisper, he tells Carlton that 'the pigeon is coming.'

A party of three advance from the other room, and as they come in, Carlton arises, and stretching out his hand to Harry Whitmore, says:

'How are you this evening, my dear sir? I'm exceedingly pleased to see you and your friends here. Mr. Meadows, how do you do? Walk into the other room a few moments, and take some supper and a glass of wine; in the mean time, we'll manage to make our table a little more exclusive.'

The young men did as they were desired; and soon the report of a champagne cork announced that they had obeyed directions. A half hour later, and the young men arose from table, much higher spirited than when they sat down, and re-entered the faro room.

It was now only occupied by about a dozen persons, and all these were of that class called sporting *gentlemen*. The other customers, whose games were too light for profit, had been reminded that it was one o'clock, and time to close, they had therefore absented themselves.

'We can have a cosy, genteel game, now, Charley!' said Harry Whitmore, as he seated himself with his two companions, directly before the dealer. The other replied:

'I hope it will be a more winning one than the last I played.'

His look and tone were both a little gloomy as he spoke; but as others seemed to notice this, he assumed a gayer tone, and addressing himself to Carlton, cried:

'We intend to run you hard to-night, sir. We've brought a *pile* amongst us, on purpose to break the bank.'

There was a singular smile on the banker's face, when he replied :

'We'll have to stand our luck, what ever it is. Fortune is more fickle than woman !'

Meadows was about to reply, but Selden, who had been 'fixing' the cards, now cried :

'Make your bets, gentlemen ! deal's ready !'

The countenance of Meadows became a shade paler as he drew out a large roll of bank notes from his pocket-book, and laid them down by his right hand. The eyes of the gamblers sparkled all the brighter, when they noted the *hundred* marks upon the bills and saw that he intended to 'play large.' They too, to keep up appearances, began to have their fives and tens changed into checks, and placed their bets also on the table.

'Shall I give you some checks?' asked Carlton of Meadows.

'No, sir ! I will play a larger game than that ?' and as he spoke he placed three one hundred bills on a single card.

Harry Whitmore bet a twenty dollar bill on the same card, and Gus. Livingston followed suite with a five.

'All down?' asked Mr. Sam Selden, with a quiet glance at each face around the table.

No answer being given, the affirmative was assumed, and the deal commenced.

Charles Meadows tried to appear calm, but the colour began to heighten in his face, his lips began to quiver and his hand to tremble.

The deal went on. The ace, whereon Charles had laid his money, won, and his bet was doubled. Of course Gus, and Harry also won, and the two latter at once took up their bets and winnings. Not so with their reckless friend. His game was evidently desperate and he let his six hundred remain upon the card.

The deal again went on, and again that ace won, leaving twelve hundred dollars on the card. The excitement of Meadows now became intense. The pupils of his eyes dilated—the colour came and went in his face as the flushes of the Aurora Borealis flit across a northern sky. Thrice he moved his hand to take up the money—but he withdrew it again, and in a stern tone cried :

'Go on with your deal ! it shall be all or nothing !'

The others all stopped to see his play and the deal went on. Again, for the fourth time, that card won.

Twenty-four hundred dollars were now his own, and it seemed as if he should have been satisfied, but he was not, for in a tone of triumph, he cried :

'I told you I'd run you hard, Carlton !'

'Yes,' replied the latter, with a dissembled appearance of chagrin, 'you do seem to be in luck to-night !'

'I am, and it is high time that I was. I've lost enough within the last two weeks to drive a man mad! Shuffle for a fresh deal, while I take a glass of that old brandy to steady my nerves. I'll show you how to bet now, fellows!'

The moment that Charles turned his back to go to the side-board, Carlton bent his head over to Harry, and in a whisper asked:

'How large is his pile, to-night?'

'Five thousand, he told me, just before he came in!'

A smile was exchanged between the two, and the next moment Charles returned, having swallowed a bumper of brandy.

'All ready, again!' cried the polished Selden. 'Make your bets, gentlemen; make your bets!'

All declined; saying that it was now a battle between Meadows and the bank, and they preferred looking on to engaging in the game.

The dealer still remained calm and composed, and fingered the cards as coolly as if thousands were not depending upon their turn. The deal commenced afresh, Charley again betting upon the ace.

The cards were turned up—he lost, at one sweep, all of his winnings. He took from the roll of bills in his pocket-book exactly the same amount—laid it again upon the ace. A second time it lost. He had now but twenty-three hundred dollars left. With that recklessness which blind despair only can give, he laid down two thousand dollars upon that fatal ace. Mr. Sam Selden smiled as he saw this; one quick movement of the villain's dexterous fingers and again the ace was turned upon his own side.

'Your luck has turned!' remarked Carlton in a low tone, 'you had better wait for another chance!'

'I think I will; yes, sir, I think I *will*,' responded the young man in a hollow voice, with a calmness which was supernaturally strange, because it was forced.

Then he turned to his companions:

'Let us go on a spree. Let's have a regular bender—I've three hundred left, and it'll just put us through fair!'

'Where shall we go?' asked Harry.

'To Jule's, or to hell! I don't care where, so there's plenty of liquor to be had! Harry Whitmore, if you knew what I know to-night, you'd —— no, I won't say it!'

'Won't say what, Charles, my dear fellow?' replied Harry. 'What is the matter? You look wild! Are you ill?'

'No—no! I was only thinking. It's nothing now—but I had a strange fancy. Did you ever see a man shot?'

'Shot?'

'Yes, in this way, just so!' cried the young man, and quick as thought he drew a pistol from his pocket, cocked it, placed it against his temple, and pulled the trigger.

Harry and Livingston sprang instantly to his side, but had the weapon exploded, their movement would have been too late. As it was the cap merely burst, but the unfortunate young man gasped, murmured :

‘Eternal disgrace ! my poor sister and mother !’ then fell back senseless on the floor. The excitement had been too much for him—the wretched youth had fainted.

‘We must not not carry him home in this state? where can we put him till he recovers?’ said Harry, as he helped to raise the young man from the carpet, and took the pistol which Charles still held with a convulsive clutch.

‘I have a room up stairs,’ replied Carlton, ‘where he can be taken care of for the present, and I will send for my own doctor. He is used to such cases, and knows how to treat them.’

The party now broke up. Harry Whitmore assisting to carry Charles up to the bed-room which Mr. Carlton offered for the use of his victim.

Whitmore sent Livingston away, but remained himself, saying that he would watch over his friend till daylight. After the doctor came, Selden, Carlton, and Harry left the room for a few moments and returned to the bank to divide the plunder.

‘How much has he got out of his old man, now;—old S——, I mean?’ asked Carlton, alluding to Charles.

‘About fourteen or sixteen thousand, I think ! It is hard to find out, for he does not know that I am aware of his defalcations.’

‘Well, there is plenty more to be had, if he only plays his game right—I think I shall have to advise him, somewhat !’

‘Well, do anything that don’t commit me. I’ve a game to play with his sister, which must not be blocked, till it is through !’

‘Ah, you’re a sad dog among the women !’ said Selden, with an approving smile—‘I’m lucky myself, but you run me out of sight, in that line.’

‘Never mind the women—they’re a curse to a man at the best !’ cried Carlton, ‘let us talk of this business. After we get all we can out of old S——, through this pigeon, I want to use him in another way. I’ll set Jack Circle and his gang to work, and with this fellow’s knowledge, we can make a clean sweep of the whole establishment.’

‘What !—are you connected with him? I never dreamed that you were quite so extensive in your villany !’ cried Whitmore, in a tone of surprise.

Carlton frowned, but simply replied :

‘You’ve a great deal to learn yet, sir ! but we’ll put off this matter till to-morrow, and then have a regular understanding in the case.’

Harry now returned to his friend's side, and the others retired to their rooms.

CHAPTER V.

ON a bed in his neat, second-story back-chamber, lay Mr. Precise. He had been very sick, with an inflammatory rheumatism, caught with a severe cold, at the time when he returned to his house, on foot, from the Five Points, without his overcoat, which the reader will remember he took off to cover the sick woman in the Brewery.

A large writing table was drawn close up to his bed-side, and before this sat Frank Hennock, pen in hand, busily writing. Numerous letters lay before him, and as from time to time he referred to these, it was presumptive that he was responding to them.

It was near night, so near that Mr. Precise said :

'You had best light a candle, Francis. It will hurt your eyesight to write in the twilight. Thank God, candles are plenty, and it is better to consume them than the sight.'

Frank answered only by arising and obeying the wish.

Again seating himself, he was about to resume his work, when Mr. Precise interrupted him by asking :

'Who was that gentleman that you named to me to-day, Francis, as a good lawyer ; one who could be entrusted with the legal matters regarding the inheritances of the Hunt family ?'

'Mr. Tarhound, sir. He is a very smart man—(in his own opinion).' The last four words were uttered *sotto voce*.

'I think I'd like to see him Francis. My head is completely turned topsy turvy with this business. I sometimes wish that I hadn't a drop of the Hunt blood in my veins, or that the family had never left any property !'

The old gentleman was unusually petulant as he said this, for his body was racked with pain. A twinge came over him as he made the last expression, and while it made him writhe under its torture, his red face turned to even a darker purple. But it passed away, and he became more calm.

'I was wrong to make that last wish !' said he, 'very wrong, for I want this money. Yes, I *need* it very much !'

'You, in *need*, sir ?' exclaimed Frank.

'Yes, my good boy ; not for myself, but for others. Have you forgotten the misery we saw but a few nights since ?'

'Oh, no, sir, nor can I ever forget it.'

'I don't think you can, my boy—indeed, I don't. I wish now to be rich, Francis, to be very rich, so that I can help

these poor wretches. I've a plan in my head, which I've been thinking of all the day long, to save and benefit them.'

'What is it, sir, if you please?'

'It is this, Francis. When my share of the Hunt estate comes to me, if it is two or three hundred thousand dollars, as they say it may be, I will buy a large farm, eight or ten miles from the city, and put up plenty of houses and workshops. I will call it the "HOME OF THE POOR." You shall help me to manage its affairs, for I will be at its head, and we will go and pick up all these poor people and take them there. I will be very particular, Francis, in the government. There shall be no drinking, no dissolute conduct. The women shall have a separate department, except those who are married, and they shall be taught to sew, and do other work. The men shall work the farm, raise their own food; or such as are mechanics, shall have tools and employment. All of the money arising from their labour above their simple expenses shall belong to those who earn it, and for them I will keep a kind of savings bank. I will have a school for the children, and they shall be brought up and educated under my own inspection. Those who have been wicked, shall never hear the past alluded to. Their crimes shall be forgotten, and all encouragement shall be given to them to live in the right way. I will have prizes for all those who behave well—I will kindly reason with those who do not.'

'It would be a great blessing, sir,' said Frank, who had been gravely listening to the good old man's plan, 'especially if that principle of not keeping up the memory of the past to the wretched, should be carried out. There are good asylums for the wretched in this city, but they seldom reform any one, because, either by direct words, careless hints, or thoughtless airs of superiority, they crush the spirit back into the very mire it is struggling to arise from.'

'It is true. How well you reason, my good boy. You are the very one I need, Francis, in this great work. I wish to accomplish it: to see it succeed, and to know that I have saved some miserable creatures, from despair and crime; to see them happy, industrious and prosperous around me, and then I will be willing to die. Yes, to calmly go up to that God who will reward those who do their *duty* here below.'

'You can go on with your letters, Francis, I'll think this matter over, while you are writing.'

'If you please, sir, I should like to go and see my mother! She was not very well, last evening, when I was there!' replied the young man.

'Well, well, you may go, but be back early. You're a good boy—you love your mother. I like you for it, Francis, I do, indeed!'

Frank carefully filed his letters again, wiped his pen, and

placed it across the top of his inkstand, and laid everything in its place upon the table, before he arose. Mr. Precise watched every motion, and a quiet smile lighted up his face as he saw how well the youth followed the lessons he had taught him.

‘Go to the safe, Francis—here, take the key from under my pillow,’ said the old gentleman, ‘and take an eagle from a little tin box which contains just a hundred of them, and give it to your mother from me, to buy her warm clothes with. It is a very cold winter.’

‘Oh, you are too good, sir; too good!’ said Francis, in a tone of grateful feeling, but he took the key and went for the money.

While this good old man was laying there, even amid his own sufferings and pains, planning ways of benefiting those who are ever to be found in this city, there were misers counting their gold, and clinging to it as fondly as ever a husband did to his long-loved, tried and cherished bride.

Yes, there were old men, who though on the very point of leaving this world on a voyage where they can carry no cargo, not even their shrivelled carcases, counted and gloated over their gold, as if it could save their souls from perdition, their bodies from the worm. And were a naked, sick and life-weary beggar to ask these men for alms, their answer would be colder far than the wintry blast.

CHAPTER VI.

ONE week can make a strange change in a beautiful being. It can fade the rose-hued cheek; it can dim the lustrous eye; it can shadow the lily brow; and oh, what may it not do with the heart, for from that comes all these changes.

In the very room where we last saw her, in that singular house, with the back-alley entrance, stood Mary Sheffield. Her cheek was pale, her eyes were sunken, her lips blue and quivering with excitement. The hand in which she held a crushed letter was trembling like the wing of a dying dove; her whole frame seemed quaking with excitement.

With her left hand pressed to her brow as if to still some throbbing pain, she paced to and fro across the room; her right hand clenched the letter.

‘Oh God! has it come to this!’ she moaned in a low tone of agony. ‘Deceived—betrayed—ruined! He writes that he is married—*writes*, to break the shock of our meeting. Oh, Heaven!—shall I not *curse* him? No; let Heaven avenge me. He will be here soon and will he dare to look

upon her whose doom he has sealed; whose life he has blasted?

A light tap at the door. Mary turned towards it, and stood pale, still as a marble statue. She spoke not; but with a powerful effort, seemed to still down the tempest in her heart.

The door was opened, and he whom we last saw with her, Albert Shirley, entered. Hastily he crossed the room, and with open arms advanced to embrace the lady.

Then for the first time she moved and spoke.

'Back, sir, keep back! Lay not your hand upon my form, lest it freeze!' and with an air of queenly dignity, she motioned him off with the same hand which held his letter.

'What does this mean, dear Mary?' asked the gentleman in a tone of surprise—'I expected tears and reproaches from you—but not this icy coldness!'

'Tears, sir! Can you, like Moses, draw water from a rock? Can sap come from a blasted tree? Oh, God! Albert Shirley, how can you, how dare you look upon her whom you have ruined.'

'Ruined, Mary! oh, speak not so! I will not desert you—I will save you!'

'Save me? From what? The poor-house, or the common brothel? Will you condescend to make me that which I *am* and yet dare not name, and make me an abettor in your adultery? Albert Shirley, I can die, but we must part—for ever! Go to her whom you have injured—your *wife*; but when you press her to your breast, remember how you have wronged me. Albert, you will have my blood to answer for before the bar of God—for my hours are told!'

'No—no, *dear* Mary. Do not speak so. I will do all that I can for you. Your beauty led me to this—I will do all that I can to repair it.'

'You know my situation?' As the young girl asked this, her cheeks burned with a momentary blush, but it passed away in a moment, and left her even paler than before.

'Yes,' he replied, 'I do, and already have I made arrangements which will save you the shame of an exposure, and preserve your reputation.'

'What are they?'

'Whenever you call with this card, upon Madame Sitstill, whose number is also on it, she will do all for you that is necessary. She will be kind to you as a mother, and I have given orders for every comfort that money can command.'

The girl stood and looked at him while he thus spoke, with an expression of such utter despair and misery, that if he had been possessed of a heart of stone, he would have felt it.

He did, and in a kind, imploring tone, he said:

'Dear Mary—do listen to and believe me. Come, sit down

by me—let me hold your poor head on my breast, and once more kiss your brow.’

Listlessly, even as if she had been an automaton, she suffered herself to be led to the sofa, when he seated himself by her side. She shrunk from him, when he put his arm around her waist, and after he had kissed her upon the forehead, she turned away her head with an involuntary shudder.

‘Let us talk calmly, dear Mary,’ said he—‘what *is*, cannot be helped. Shelley says, “what ’twas weak to do, ’tis weaker to regret, once being done.” Cheer up; tell me of what you are thinking.’

‘Only of murder, sir!’ responded the pale girl, still keeping her face turned from him.

‘Murder, Mary! What do you mean?’

‘Have not you asked me to commit a murder?’

‘No—no, child. Call not the necessary act of which we have spoken, a murder. If that was a murder, hundreds of such crimes are committed every month in this city.’

‘It *is* a murder—it may prove a double murder, for I cannot endure much now!’

‘Do not fear, dear Mary. There is no danger under such experienced hands as Mrs. S. Do you consent to go to her?’

‘Oh, God! what can I do? I *must*, for if it is hard to bear alone the knowledge of my own shame, how could I endure the finger of scorn from others.’

‘It is true, Mary. For your own sake—for mine, do as I desire. When shall I have a room engaged for you?’

‘Oh, not now. I cannot yet leave my place. I am pledged to give one month’s notice before I leave my situation. Give me time to become prepared for the horrible suffering which know I must endure.’

‘You shall have it, Mary. It will be time enough this three months yet.’

‘Then, in the meantime, promise never to see me again!’

‘Never to see you, Mary! Oh, cruel, cruel girl! You know not how I love you, or you would not act so!’

‘Cruel! Albert Shirley you are the last being on earth to talk to me of cruelty. Have I not perilled and lost all that is precious to a woman, for your sake? Cruel! let the tiger which tears the poor gazelle, talk to it of cruelty, or the hawk which rends the bosom of the dove. MAN, no longer, my love—FAREWELL!’

Before the astonished Shirley could rise to his feet, she had snatched her bonnet, veil, and shawl from the arm of the sofa, and darted from the room.

He knew that it was useless to follow her—and after going as far as the door, returned to the sofa. He sighed heavily as he re-seated himself.

‘She is a strange creature!’ he muttered in soliloquy. ‘If

I could have made her my wife, she would have been the most true and devoted one that ever blessed a husband. But that was impossible. I do not wish to lose her, either. She is a magnificent girl. I hope she will be prudent—and perhaps after this first burst of passion is over, she will come back to quiet reason, and be as I wish her.'

Oh, little did that man know of Mary Sheffield's heart, when he thought that her feelings, because quickly aroused, must be fleeting and changeable. There is a mine in a western mountain, a mine of coal, which fifty years ago was set on fire by a light accidentally coming in contact with a current of gas. That mine caught in an instant—yet it has burned ever since. Where there is fuel in the heart, the flame of feeling may be lighted in an instant, and still it can burn *for ever*.

After his few words of soliloquy, Shirley arose and rang a little silver bell which was on the centre table.

The same lady of whom he made inquiries, as described in the eleventh chapter of our first part, answered the bell by her own appearance.

Shirley handed her a ten dollar bill, and bade her good day; then departed.

'Pretty good room-rent, for a half hour!' said the woman, with a smile, as she glanced at the bill. 'Mary must have been very kind, to make him so generous.'

Little did that woman dream of the scene which had just occurred in that room.

CHAPTER VII.

IN the front parlour of the '355' house alluded to, by Harry Whitmore and Maria Deloraine, in the thirteenth chapter of our first part, sat the female who we have last named.

From time to time she glanced at the gold watch which she carried, and each moment her manner betrayed her impatience. She was seated by the centre-table, which was covered with periodicals and annuals. She had already glanced at the titles of every one of these, and looked at some of the engravings in them, but she seemed too nervous to appreciate or care for them.

She was there, waiting the arrival of Harry Whitmore, and Isabella Meadows, prepared to wait the arrival of Harry's sister. Her nervousness was very natural. Why should not a woman be excited, who was taking her first step as an accomplice in the intended ruin of a pure and helpless girl.

She arose, went to the window, and slightly pushed aside the heavy crimson curtains, that she might look out into the

street. As she did this, the door-bell rang, and an expression of satisfaction passed over her face.

'They have come,' she said, and then she hurried to her seat, and took up a book, which she opened in the middle, so as to appear deeply engaged.

The next moment the door opened, and Harry entered. Isabella was leaning on his arm. As Maria arose, Whitmore advanced, and introduced the two.

'Maria, this is Miss Meadows, of whom I have often spoken to you;—Isabella, know my sister!'

Maria at once sprang forward with an appearance of glad surprise, and kissing Isabella warmly, said:

'I have heard Harry speak of you so often, that I know you already. You've been bewitching him, I fear. He is ever talking of you.'

The young girl blushed, and as she returned the kisses of Maria, with interest for the same, replied:

'I am glad to know that he remembers me when absent from my side.'

'That is the time, dearest,' said Harry, 'when one who loves, thinks most of her to whom he is devoted, because then he most misses her. You know the old song—" 'tis said that absence conquers love," &c., yet it is not so. But, Isabella, you must excuse me. I've some business in Wall-Street to attend to. I'll leave you with Maria, and return in an hour, or less.'

When the two females were alone, the thread of their conversation was again renewed.

'My brother loves you very much, Isabella.'

'And I love him, too, very much!' replied the artless girl, colouring, however, as she spoke.

'So he has told me. He wishes to marry you immediately, but we are so situated with mother, that I fear he would be imprudent in doing so. He has told you all, I suppose?'

'He has only told me that she was a stern woman of strong prejudices!'

'Has he not told you that I do not live with her?'

'No, indeed, he has not!' replied Isabella, in a tone of surprise.

'It is true. This is the house of a friend, where I am boarding for the time. My mother quarrelled with me, and I determined to accept the offer of a kind friend, and to come here, and live with her until my mother became more reasonable.'

'I am so sorry to hear of trouble existing between a parent and her children. I have the dearest, best mother in all the world. You must come and see her. I know you'll love her.'

'I will, if she is like her daughter.'

'Oh, she is far, far better!' replied the simple, pure-hearted

creature, 'and I know she will like you, even as I do?' and Isabella drew her chair close up to Maria, and clasping her arms around her neck, kissed her tenderly.

The cheek of the latter was for the first time, for many a day covered with blushes. Did not the fire of shame fill her heart, and cause them? Shame, that she should be an accomplice in the intended ruin of that pure and spotless creature. She could not even return the kisses which she received; her whole frame quivered as with the tremors of a troubled spirit, beginning to be irresolute in its very guilt.

'It cannot be—it must not!' she murmured, in a tone, not intended for Isabella's ear. But they were heard by the latter, for she said:

'What do you allude to? Have you any trouble, dear sister? Forgive me, but I must call you *sister*.'

'Oh, Isabella, do not call me *sister*! Do not, for the sake of the heaven which made you pure, and me———!'

What Maria Deloraine would have said, we know not. At that instant, the door opened, and Harry Whitmore re-entered the room. He saw the flushed countenance, and agitated manner of Maria, and in a moment divined that something was wrong. There was a momentary flash of suspicion in his heart, and anger in his eye, but he controlled it, and said in a gay tone:

'You've got the blues again, sister? You mustn't mind these fits of sadness, Isabella. Sis will have them at times; but she is generally happy.'

'Oh, yes, *very* happy! Happy as the death-doomed prisoner. Happy as a dying infidel, who feels there is a God, but not for him!' replied Maria, bitterly.

'Oh, do not talk so, my dear sister! You shall be happy—Henry and me will make you so!' cried Isabella, trying to soothe the agitation of the other with caresses.

Henry—I—yes, *we* are trying to make *you* happy! Are we not Henry? Shall I not tell her how much we intend to do for her?

'Hush! as you value your life, hush!' whispered Harry, as he bent down and pretended to kiss her, and then as he saw she was about to speak, again he added, 'if you speak, she shall never leave this house. You *know* me!'

The face of the girl turned pale—but it was with pain, for all unconsciously he had grasped her arm with the force of a vice. But she did not speak again in that strain. She covered her face with her hands, and burst into a flood of tears.

'Dear Isabella, do me the favour to step into the next room a moment—I don't think there is any one there. I must reason with my sister a little. I know her troubles, you do not,'

cried Harry, at the same time leading her to the folding doors of the back room, which he opened.

But he was mistaken when he said there was no one there. Upon a sofa reclined a lady—one who looked as if she came from the land where cheeks are dark, and blood is warm. Her hair was black as the inner feathers of a raven's breast, her eyes large, dark as jet, and languishing, too, as ever threw dangerous glances at a man. Her form was large, but faultless in proportion; and as she started to her feet at their entrance, she really looked beautiful. She had been reading, but she dropped the book upon the floor as she arose.

Harry quickly stepped across the room, and picked it up, saying—

'Ah! is it you, Miss Emma? Don't be alarmed, I pray you—I've a friend of my *sister's* here, whom I will leave with you a moment, for I wish to see *Maria* alone!'

The girl looked at him with astonishment, but a glance from him, and a single whispered word of caution, and a promise of money, acted like a charm. She at once seemed to understand the whole matter.

'Any friend of dear *Maria*, or of her good brother, is welcome with me!'

'Then, Isabella, I'll leave you with Miss Wood a few moments—when sister is more calm, I'll call you in.'

He returned to the front parlour, drew close the doors after him, and again stood by the side of *Maria*. She was still in tears, sobbing loudly.

'*Maria*, what does this mean? what has made you so chick-en-hearted all at once?'

'Oh God! Harry Whitmore, I was once like *her*—spare her, for the love of Heaven. Can you look at her innocent face, and hear her pure thoughts, and still demon-like seek to destroy her?'

'Pshaw, girl, you don't think I'd destroy her—you're not destroyed—and I wouldn't make her worse than you are!'

'No—you *couldn't*! And yet you would add one more crime to my fearful catalogue! Oh, Harry, if you are a man, give over this intention!'

'*Maria*, it is too late; but I will reward you better. When she is mine, you shall have one thousand dollars.'

'One thousand dollars?' muttered the girl, who had ceased sobbing; 'one thousand dollars? Often I have vowed, if ever I could get so much together, to go where I was unknown, and to commence a new life; to live once again virtuously.'

'Well, *Maria*, now is your chance. You can make it.'

'Yes, but at the expense of a human soul—at the expense of all which that poor girl possesses, that is worth living for. Oh, Harry, I *cannot*!'

'Cannot, girl! There is no such word for me. You shall have your choice. I will soon let Mrs. Windeman know what you are—I'll have your name "heralded" through the city, till you are as well known as Clara Norris, or any other of the stock company of the theatre of vice in the city. Choose, and that speedily! Shall it be the *thousand*?'

The poor girl shuddered, but she knew that she was at his mercy, and she feared the public exposure which he threatened. Beside this, *interest* was gnawing out the good feelings which had just began to grow in her heart, for a dream and hope, which she has long cherished, was now within her reach; she could, by a compliance with his wishes, gain the means of forever quitting the sickening life which she so long had led.

Her tears ceased. With a pale cheek, and a sad calmness, which was strong and firm, because forced with a desperate effort, she said—

'It shall be as you will. Yes, though it sinks my soul into hell itself, and tears the last good principle from my wretched heart—I will do it. Call in your victim. I'll wheedle and smile *now*! oh, yes, I'll be a very queen of deception!'

'Now you talk like a good sensible girl, as you are!' said Harry, quite contented to see the storm pass over, which had so nearly wrecked his designs.

He then went to the back-parlour door, and opening it, cried:

'You can come in now, dear Isabella. The shower is over, and the sun has come out!'

Isabella gladly obeyed his request, and when she saw a smile once more on Maria's face, her own brightened up, and she sprang into her arms, and kissed her sweetly.

'Oh, I am so happy, dear sister. May I not call you sister, Maria?'

Certainly, if you like to. My brother appears in a hurry to make you such.'

The young girl blushed, while Harry caught her to his arms, pressed his lips warmly to hers, and said:

'Yes, dearest, our marriage shall not be long delayed. I cannot live so much from your side:—but 'tis getting late, I don't wish to hurry you, but I've an engagement to keep, which makes time precious to me. Beside, I've your brother to meet this evening, and some arrangements to make for him before then.'

These 'arrangements' were only to prepare Mr. Carlton and his gang for the meeting, which the reader is already aware of. But the sister little dreamed of this. She replied to his remark:

'Do urge him to come home earlier, dear Henry. He stays

out so late, and often, that I fear he is hurting his health. He looks very pale, and care-worn lately.'

'He has so much to do, dearest. The head book keeper of such an establishment as that of S——, has a great deal of labour and much responsibility.

'Yes, replied the young girl, with a sigh, 'I wish that I was rich, he should not toil so any longer.'

'You will be, soon, dearest—but put on your bonnet and cloak, again. We must go.'

This was done—a kiss and an invitation to call, was exchanged between the two girls, and then Isabella returned homewards.

CHAPTER VIII.

It was night—the night after that when Charles Meadows was so completely 'done' by Carlton and his fiendish gang, and of course the first night for Angelina and her mother in their new quarters, in Leight Street. The two were in a small but neatly furnished little parlour, or sitting-room. A small cooking stove, with its pipe leading through into the chimney of the boarded-up fire-place, was nearly red-hot, and on its top a tea-kettle steamed up cheerily, singing as merrily as a 'cricket on the hearth.'

The open door of a little chamber on one side of them showed the white counterpane and neat tester of a bed, one very unlike the little cot which had served them as a resting-place in the cellar, where they had *existed*, we can scarcely say, *lived*.

There was not much furniture. Livingston had hired this, and had not been very extravagant either, in his outlay, but still this was luxury, compared to the bare, cracked walls of their abode.

Angelina sat by the little pine work-table in one corner, sewing, as usual, but her good mother was engaged in setting her tea-table, and she made more bustle about it, than would ten servants in a fashionable house, for it had been very long since she was able to spread a cloth upon her table, and to put unbroken cups, plates, saucers, &c. upon it. And her comments too, as she set out the things, were really amusing, and even brought an occasional smile upon the thin face of her poor child.

'I do declare ! I never !' she would cry, as she placed each new dish upon the table—'I never did set a table so nicely before in all my life. Things will taste so good, 'Lina, dear ! Don't work any more to-night, child ! Just get up, and look how nice I've got everything laid !'

The girl did so, but as she looked at the table, she exclaimed in a tone of surprise :

‘ You’ve set the table for three, mother !’

‘ Yes, child. The kind gentleman said he’d be here to take tea with us !’

‘ Oh, mother, do not ask him here. Indeed, he means some dreadful wrong. He would not be so generous to us if he did not expect some return.’

‘ Tush ! child. You are always so suspicious. Directly, you’ll begin to think that *I’d* conspire to wrong you.’

‘ Oh, no, dear mother !’ cried the young girl, bursting into tears, and throwing her thin arms around her neck, ‘ do not say so, dear mother, I know you well, but I cannot drive from my brain the memory of that dreadful night, and the connection which this man had with it.’

‘ But, child, he has said that he drank too much wine on that night ; that he did not know what he was doing. He certainly apologised very handsomely.’

‘ Yes, mother, but—’

The young girl’s reply was cut short, by a rap at the door, and while the mother hastened to open it, Angelina hurried into the bed-room, and closed the door.

‘ Ah, good evening, madam. Hope you’re well, *very* well ! Where is your beautiful daughter, and how *is* she ?’ said Mr. Gus Livingston, in a free and easy manner, as he entered.

‘ Well, I do declare. Why, the child has gone and hid herself in the bed-room. She is *so* timid, sir ; you must forgive her, for it is natural to the poor child. I was so once.’

Livingston bit his lip with vexation, but took the chair which the old lady placed near the stove for him, and said :

‘ Your daughter has no occasion to fear me. I’m sure she never had a truer friend than myself.’

‘ I know it, sir, indeed I do ; but Angelina was so frightened on that first night, when you met her in Broadway, that she cannot get over it.’

‘ She will soon get acquainted with me, and like me better. I don’t think that I am so very frightful !’

‘ Oh, no, sir ; you are gentle, kind, and very good-looking. I will talk to her, and try to make her like you better.’

‘ Do, my good woman, do ! Get her to come and take tea, at least.’

The mother went into the bed-room, and closed the door after her, while Gus. remained in his chair, carelessly whistling over an air, from some opera or other.

It was several minutes before the bed-room door opened again, and Gus. had heard loud whispering from the mother, and sobs from the daughter. But at last, the former seemed, in a measure, to have conquered the repugnance of the girl, for she came in leading her by the hand.

He arose, and reaching out his hand, said, in a low and respectful tone :

‘I had hoped that you would have forgiven my rudeness before now, Miss. Indeed, it makes me very unhappy to know that you are angry with me.’

She did not take his hand, but in a faltering voice, replied :

‘I am not angry with you, sir. I have forgiven you, I hope God has.’

‘Thank you, I shall feel more happy now, but not, if you ever treat me with so much coldness.’

‘It is better, sir,’ replied the young girl, in a firmer tone—‘for you know how different are our situations. We never can be intimate. You are a gentleman, a rich one, I suppose. You know that I am a poor, uneducated sewing-girl.’

‘You need be so no longer. You are too delicate and beautiful for such a life.’

‘I shall not lead it long, sir !’ replied the girl, in a sad tone, which told that thoughts of death were in her heart.

‘Not a month longer ; no, not a week, *dear* girl, without your wish !’ said he passionately.

‘Oh, mother ! dear mother, do not leave me here alone !’

This exclamation was caused by the mother taking up the water pail, and going to the door, and Angelina was afraid to be left for a moment, in such company. But her mother, who thought her presence only a draw-back upon him, whom she wished to become her daughter’s husband, made this an excuse for leaving them a moment together.

‘I’m only going out to the pump, for a bucket of water. It is only a few steps from the door ; I’ll be back in a moment, child !’ cried the mother, not even pausing at her child’s request.

The moment she was gone, Livingston continued :

‘Yes, dear girl ; I love you, and will make you mine !’

‘How ?’ and as the young creature asked that question, she fixed her clear blue eyes on his, with an expression which would read every thought in his heart.

He could not stand that look. His eye fell beneath it, and he blushed up to the very temples while he hesitated to answer.

She noted this, and exclaimed.

‘I *knew* it was so ! You have sought me, but to destroy me, as the hunter seeks his game !’

‘Oh, no, dear girl, you wrong me ! I did not understand your question !’

‘Then hear it plainly. Would you marry me—would you link yourself to me by the laws of God and man ?’

‘Yes—that is, as soon as I can. I am so situated with my parents that—’

‘Oh, sir, you need make no excuses. Your hesitation in

answering me would be proof, if nothing else occurred, of your intentions. But did you really wish and intend to marry me, you *could* not.'

'Could not? Why, my beautiful—oh, why?'

'Because, sir, *I do not love you*. No man living can ever claim my hand, who does not possess my heart: no, not were he possessed of uncounted gold, and I had to work the hand which I refused him, to the bare bones.'

'Oh, do not speak so. You must—you *shall* be mine!'

'Never, sir, *never*!' replied the young girl, proudly and firmly. 'If it is this that has caused your bounty to my poor mother, take it back. We can return to our cellar, we still can work, and earn enough to keep us alive.'

'Foolish girl, you know not what you refuse. Beware how you push my love from you, for you can be made to feel that a slighted lover can become a bitter enemy.'

'I care not, sir. My trust is in God! You cannot harm me, for He, the All-powerful, is my protector!'

'Girl, you seem determined to defy me. Do you not know that I can go to your employers, whom I know, and cut you off from work?'

'There are others who can employ me.'

'Were I to go to these, and say you were no better than the girls who nightly walk the streets, would they employ you?'

'It would be false—*cruelly* false!' cried the poor creature, bursting into tears.

'Yet they would believe me quicker than you!'

'God would know the truth! oh, leave me, now, sir, if there is a spark of true manhood in you, leave me!' moaned the poor girl in her agony.

'You had better not force me too far. You never shall rest—you cannot hide from me. I have offered to make you my wife—you have refused it, now you shall be—'

He whispered that last word in her ear, and it must have been one of horrible import, for she sprang from his side, and shrieked as if a serpent had stung her to the heart.

She rushed toward the street door. Another moment, and she would have been in the gloom and darkness without, had not the door opened, and her mother appeared.

'What is the matter, child? Dear Angelina, what is the matter?' cried the mother, terrified by her daughter's actions, and palid looks, and setting down her pail of water, she put her arms around the trembling creature, to keep her from falling.

'We must go from here, mother; we must leave this place!' sobbed the poor girl.

'Leave it, child? What does this mean? Has he dared to insult my poor girl.'

'Oh, mother, ask no questions—but let us go!'

‘What! not wait for tea, when it is all ready, and I’ve set out things so nice?’

‘Wait for nothing, that comes from *his* hands, mother! It would be poison to our souls.’

‘Oh, what has he been doing—come into the bed-room, and tell me, child!’

‘She need not leave my presence, to tell you, madam. I offered to make her my wife—she scornfully refused me, and then I said words in my haste, when I did not mean; words which I was sorry for the moment I uttered them. I hope she will forget them and forgive me.’

‘Never—never!’ exclaimed the indignant girl, ‘and, sir, if you do not now, this instant, leave this room, I will! I would rather wander about exposed to all the dangers of the streets, than to live for one moment in a palace where you were present!’

‘It shall be as you wish. I will come here no more!’ replied the villain, in a tone of remorse. ‘My ardent, passionate nature carried me too far; a banishment from your presence will indeed be a punishment to me!’

After saying this, he took his hat, cane and cloak, bowed respectfully, and departed.

The moment he was gone, the sewing-girl turned to her mother, and while the tears streamed down her cheeks, said:

‘I am sorry for your sake, mother, to leave all these comforts, but we must. I must hide from the dreadful persecutions of that man. He is, indeed, what I feared he was, and will do everything on earth now to accomplish my ruin, in both body and soul!’

‘Where can we go, child—where can we go? back to our miserable cellar?’

‘No, mother, he would find us out there. There is one place where we can go—it is a dreadful spot, but we would be safer there, because he never would think I would choose such a place to live in!’

‘Where is it, child?’

‘It is down in a part of the city that is called the Five Points. When I worked for those clothing men in Chatham Street, I went across through there, to go by a nearer way, one day, and I met a very poor woman, to whom I gave a shilling.’

‘Oh, yes, I remember that. You gave her a shilling when you had but four.’

‘I asked her where she lived,’ continued Angelina, ‘and she showed me a large house called the Brewery, where she said all the *very* poor people lived. It is a horrible place, mother, but we can live there a little while, till this monster loses sight of me, or forgets me!’

‘I’ll do just as you wish, child. You are my only comfort

now your poor father has gone. I am glad that you got his ring back !'

'So am I, dear mother !' and as she spoke, Angelina kissed the large cornelian ring which she had upon her fore-finger. It was shaped like a shield, and had a coat of arms and crest engraven upon it.

CHAPTER IX.

At the same hour, in a back room of the same house where occurred the last scene between Mary Sheffield, and Mr. Shirley, in our sixth chapter, two persons were seated side by side in conversation.

In the fine figure, high white brow, clear blue eyes, and fine features of the lady, the reader is permitted to recognise Mrs. Carlton, her whom we last saw comfortably quartered in the gambling hell of Mr. Carlton,

The gentleman who was with her, was a middle-sized, rather well-formed person ; had blue eyes, fair complexion, and light brown hair. His face had very little intellectuality in its expression, though the features were regular, and rather pleasing. He was a little over-dressed, that is, there was a rather unnatural pretension to fashion—which the true gentleman never assumes. Many of our readers may have noticed the almost professional look of a smart, showy stage-agent ; or of an outside hotel-runner ; or of some of our city merchant 'drummers.' If so, they will know precisely how this gentleman, Mr. Charles Cooly, looked.

He was seated very close to the lady, and held one of her small white hands in his, while he conversed with her.

'You say your husband is jealous?' said he.

'Yes,' replied the lady, 'he is, and cruelly so. But I am used to it now—he has ever been so, even since the day we were married. Had he not been jealous of me, when I was as constant to him as is an angel to its God, I never would have done as I have, and have given him cause for jealousy.'

'Does he suspect me?'

'No. He can place his suspicions on no one, because we have been so very cautious. He followed me once, I think, but I threw him off my track, by taking an up-town omnibus, and going so far up.'

'Oh, yes ; it was that cold blustering night—when I so feared you would catch cold.'

'The same ; when I called you out, and we took a brief walk together.'

'Where is he now—if he should follow you to this house, he would at once know all !'

'I'm very cautious, dear Charles; for well I know his fearful temper. Should he catch us here at any time, both our lives would surely be the forfeit. Oh, I have passed through scenes with him, which I cannot describe.'

'Why do you remain with him, then, dearest. Why do you not at once fly with me to the west, or somewhere that will place us beyond his reach?'

'Oh, Charles, my children, I cannot leave them! My darling little boy, and sweet daughter, how can I desert them. No, we will wait till something occurs that may make us more happy.'

'It shall be as you wish, dearest. I only seek for your love and happiness. Were I rich, I would at once say, take them, and fly with me;—but, as it is, you know how I am struggling to get along. Had I more capital, I would go into some other business. I do not like the one I am in at present.'

'It is better than that which my husband follows. If it is less profitable, still it is more creditable.'

'True,' replied Cooly, 'but it is not one which suits my feelings.'

'You will have another, I hope, soon. Whenever you want money, come to me. I can always command some!'

'Oh, I thank you, dear Hannah, but I will not call upon you for funds. Your *love* is all that I ask.'

'That you have, Charles. I think you have had proof enough of that.'

'I have, indeed, Hannah, but such proofs are ever welcome to me,' and as he spoke, the man bent forward and impressed a long, passionate kiss upon her voluptuous lips.

She returned it with fervour—threw her arms around his neck and—we will leave this scene for another. It will not be proper for us to stay here longer.

On the morning succeeding the night, when Charles Meadows had fallen back senseless, after his attempt at suicide, after a broken and nervous slumber of perchance an hour or two, the unhappy young man awoke. Mr. Carlton was by his side—Harry Whitmore had left.

The eyes of Meadows opened, but he closed them again with a shudder.

A cold sneering smile passed over the face of the gambler—a smile more expressive of his cold-blooded fiendish nature, than we can find words to describe.

'How are you this morning, my young friend?' asked he.

Again Charles opened his eyes, then pressed his hands to his forehead convulsively, while in a faint tone, he murmured:

'I've had a horrible dream!'

'A dream, indeed!' said Carlton, 'you've been very sick.

Yes—where am I? This is not home! in the prison already? and as he spoke, the young man gazed wildly around him.

‘Ha! ha! That is an idea!’ laughed Carlton. ‘This looks like a prison, don’t it. ’Tis the best furnished one in all America, if it is!’

The scattered senses of the young man began to be more collected—he looked upon the rich furniture of the apartment, and felt that his body was stretched upon a yielding bed of down. Recognizing him who stood by the bed-side, he spoke:

‘Am I yet in your house, Mr. Carlton?’

‘You are, sir, and I have watched by you all night, or at least, all the morning. It was nearly three when you were taken sick.’

‘Sick?’ murmured the wretched youth, ‘have I been sick? I feel as if I had been dreaming of some strange and horrible scene.’

‘You were crazy as a loon. Do you remember trying to kill yourself? Nothing but a bad percussion cap saved you. It’s a good thing to have caps that will explode, sometimes, but at *others*, as in this case, a bad one saves a deal of trouble.’

‘I don’t know what you are talking about!’ replied Charles; his senses evidently still wandering.

‘Then just listen to me. You remember losing your money in fair play, at my table?’

‘Yes; my dear friend Harry was there.’

‘That is true. Do you remember what you did, after leaving the table?’

‘No; I must have drank too much.’

‘You were not drunk, but you were desperate. You tried to blow out your own brains, but the pistol didn’t go off; so you *did*—into a fainting fit.’

‘Now I know all. You had me brought here instead of sending me home. I thank you for the forethought. It has saved my mother and sister’s feelings. I thank you, indeed I do.’

‘Never mind thanks, sir, I have other things to talk with you about. I know the cause of your desperation.’

‘The *cause*, sir? What do you mean—have I been talking in my delirium?’

‘It matters not how I found it out, but old S——would be rather wrathful if he knew of those odd thousands, eh?’

With a convulsive bound, even as if he had been shot through the heart, Meadows sprang from the bed, and while with a palid face and glaring eyes he confronted Carlton, he almost shouted:

‘For God’s sake, tell me how you knew this!’

‘It matters not,’ replied Carlton, ‘how I came by it, so that I know it.’

'Well, sir, what will you do—expose me?' The young man spoke in a thick and husky tone, which told his perfect desperation.

Carlton paused a moment before he answered, as if it was a delight to him to torture the unfortunate clerk, and then replied:

'No—not if you treat me right.'

'Treat you right? Must I *bribe* you to silence.'

'You needn't use that *word* for it, but as you are in my power, you must not hesitate to accede to my wishes.'

Must not? Henry Carlton, you are talking to a desperate man. By heaven if you do not swear before God, this moment, to keep this terrible secret, I'll shoot you as I would a dog.'

'Shoot away; I will *not* swear!' replied the gambler, with his habitual cold and fiendish sneer.

The young man's hand was thrust quick as thought, into the side pocket, whence he had drawn his pistol on the preceding evening, but the weapon was not there. It had been taken care of.

Carlton saw his look of disappointment, and while he laughed, he cried:

'I always keep dangerous play-things out of children's hands. Now will you come to terms?'

'What terms? I have no money. You took all I had in the game last night.'

'You can get more, as you have already.'

'Oh, God, no! I have already taken and lost seventeen thousand dollars. I fear every hour to be found out.'

'Oh, pshaw! You can run on a year in this way, while you keep the books and cash account yourself,' replied the gambler carelessly.

'And then, what? At the end of that year would come disgrace—a public trial—a states-prison, and—it would be death to my poor mother and sister!'

'Oh, no—no danger of that! There are very few people who die of disgrace—but in this case there's no need of any one knowing it.'

'How can it be helped? Tell me, in God's name, tell me!'

'If you'll do as I wish you to, I'll see that you are never found out, and show how to make an odd fifty thousand for yourself.'

'How? Explain, if you care for my misery at all, explain!' groaned Meadows.

The gambler fixed his keen eye upon him, and continued.

'You know how large a stock old S—— keeps, and how much cash he has on hand?'

'Yes, very nearly. He never has less than from four to five hundred thousand dollars worth of goods on hand, but he

deposits most of his money in the bank. We seldom have more than four or five thousand dollars in cash in at once.

‘That’s only pin-money. Did you ever try your hand in forging?’

‘No; do not try to set me on another crime. I have done too much already.’

‘Oh, pshaw! You’re too chicken-hearted. You’re in for more than you can ever get again, why not make a haul worth having. The principle is the same. If you’re found out with what you have now done, you’ll suffer just as much as if it was ten times more.’

‘True; too true. I am in your power, now—what would you have me do?’

‘Only to draw a cheque at the *right* time, for all that you can get out of the bank, in S——’s name. On the night of the same day, through you, a gang of excellent fellows, Jack Circle’s burglars, shall borrow the keys of you, or else get their own screws fitted, and “lift” a few thousand dollars worth of silks and laces. Nothing more!’

‘Nothing *more*!’ echoed the unhappy clerk, ‘nothing more than to rob and completely ruin a man who has ever been my friend and benefactor.’

‘Why did you commence on him?’

‘Why—*why*? Because one of your villanous, fiendish gamblers first led me on to play with my own funds. Let we win till I was crazy with success, and then beat me. I *borrowed* of my employer, unknown to him, till borrowing became stealing; and here I stand a *thief*.’

‘Well—well! You use too many hard words, my boy, but as you abuse yourself as well as us, I don’t know that I’ve any right to complain! But we’ll drop all this—I shall now consider you a partner of mine—if there is any sudden danger of your being found out in what you have taken, come to me, and I’ll let you have the cash to get you out of it. We must hold back, and make a large haul.’

The young man answered not, but seated himself on the side of the bed, and seemed lost in thought.

Carlton regarded him a moment with evident satisfaction, and then said:

‘Breakfast will be ready in ten or fifteen minutes in the next room, I’ll leave you till then, to think over this matter. Only Sam Selden will breakfast with us, and he is one of *us*, you know.’

Carlton left the room after making this observation, and Meadows was alone in his *misery*.

CHAPTER X.

JACK CIRCLE and Genlis, he who styled himself the Gipsy fortune-teller, were alone in the upper back room of Jack's crib. A single candle dimly lighted the gloomy place, and gave the singular faces of these two men a dark and shadowy look. He seemed to be concocting some plan with old Jack, for he shook his head at some proposition made by the latter, and said in his usual low, and deep tone:

'It won't do, Jack! It won't do—the coppers are too wide awake!'

'They does keep their peeps purty vide hopen; it's a fact, but wool can be hauled over 'em for all that!' replied Jack, who seemed bent on having some plan of his adopted.

Genlis now took out his watch, and after noting the hour, asked:

'What time did Tobin say he would be here?'

'Vy, he was to be here habout ten—it arn't more than that now, is it?'

'Yes, ten minutes over. I'd like to see him—he is a keen boy, in his own way.'

'Yes, but it's in sich a verry small line. I does like to see men hambitious in everythin', 'specially in our line.'

What the response of Genlis would have been, we do not know, but a rap at the door, in the usual significant way, announced an intruder.

'Who's there?' asked Jack, gruffly.

'One frent, and his companie!' replied the person without, his tone and broken English at once announcing him as the French Captain.

'Ah, is that you, uncle Tommy?' and as he said this, Jack hastened to open the door.

'Yes, zare, all zat is left of me in zis dam bad wezzare!—ze dam rheumatiz, it most kill me several times!' and as he said this, Captain Tobin came in, followed by a person closely muffled in a large cloak, with a common cap drawn down so much over his eyes, as nearly to conceal his face.

'Who the devil 'ave you got there as seems afeard to show his phiz 'mongst honest folks like us?' asked Circle, looking very hard at the pickpocket's companion.

The reply was given by the stranger casting off his cloak.

'Ah, is it you, Carlton? cried Genlis, and then while he warmly shook his hand, he added, 'how goes things on at the bank?'

'Swimmingly! plenty to do, and all of the boys at work.' Then, turning to Jack, the gambler said:

'I've come to put up a job for you and your gang, Jack!'

'Vell, vot is it?—Ve're allers on 'and for anythin' as 'll pay.'

'This will, to a big figure too, if you do it up right.'

'Vell, can't you tell a feller vot it is—and not keep him in hexpense all this 'ere time.

'You know old S——'s store?'

'Him as keeps down there in Broadway, you means, doesn't you?'

'Yes, the same.'

'Yes, I knows he's got an almighty lot o' stuff in his crib, and he must 'ave plenty of the dust too!'

'Well, I want that crib cracked.'

'There's many a *vant* as is a *can't*, old feller! why the coppers is paid to keep a 'special look out for that ere place. I'd as lives try to crack a Wall-street bank, right in the face of the private watchees and all.'

'But I've got things fixed better than you know. I've some one that will fit your keys, and fix everything to your hand.'

'Vot, a hinsider?'

'Yes, one of his own clerks.'

'Vel, then there's some sense in considerin' over the matter. Don't you think so, chums?'

This last question was addressed to Tobin and Genlis.

The latter replied, that Harry Carlton knew what he was about, and that what he said was right, *was* right; while Captain Tobin put his finger to one side of his nose, contracted his brow, paused apparently for a moment's thought, and then replied:

'Yes, sare. I sink it will be von ver' grand speculatione!'

'We can make a swag of at least a couple of hundred thousand, if it is done up right!' said old Jack, and then he added—
'You just put it up your hone vay, Mr. Carlton, and when you wants the boys, just let me know, and they shall be on 'and with the tools.'

'Well, that is understood; now, what about that other affair of yours, Genlis, the one you was telling me of last evening?'

'It will be all right. Inez is on the look-out, and at the very first opportunity will seize the child.'

'You'll make a grand spec out of that, I expect!'

'Well, I hope so—money is scarce with me now-a-days.'

'And yet business is not dull.'

'No,' replied the fortune-teller, 'but then it is very trifling. Nothing but romantic young girls—clerks who sell tape and needles—Irish servant girls, &c. One can never make a fortune out of them, in fact, hardly a genteel living.'

'Well, if you all work your cards right in the case you told me, and then get two or three more of the same kind, you'll pay up for lost time.'

'It is true,' replied Genlis, 'and I don't think we can fail in this case.'

A rap at the door announced another visitor. As the right sign had been given, Jack Circle at once opened the door, and Frank Hennock entered.

'Hallo, youngster, vot is in the vind, now? Vot 'ave you come to report?'

'I came to see if Mr. Tarhound is here, I want to get him a good fat fee out of my new master.'

'A fee! For what?' exclaimed Carlton.

'Only some of the infernal Hunt business! My head is racked all to pieces with it—and it really needs a lawyer to get his money.'

'Then *get a lawyer*, don't get him. He's only fit to help thieves out of a dirty scrape,' exclaimed Carlton, again, 'he has no influence in court.'

'But this is not a court business; it is only to draw up some *papers* that he is wanted. Beside I'm too well known to the lawyers generally, and this fellow depends so much on us that he'll be sure to keep silent.'

'That's true; and silence is necessary.'

'Vel, if you wants him, youngster, I'll see that he calls on your gov'nor!' said old Circle. 'And now boys let's drink. I'm as dry as a fish out o' water. Frank, just tell 'Arriet to come up ven you goes down, ve are habout to tipple. And you may tell her to mix you summat warm, 'cause it must be cold out to night.'

Frank at once took the hint to leave, and in a few moments the old man's daughter came up. As she thrust her face into the half-opened door, leaving her body outside, she asked:

'What'll it be, my covies? Heavy wet? Cold or warm?'

'For me, brandy and water, cold,' said Genlis.

'Ditto,' added Carlton.

'What'll you have, old rheumatiz?' asked the woman, looking at Captain Tobin, who had quietly seated himself in a corner, and lighted a cigar.

'I shall 'ave some sing ver warm, madam; some sing zat will make zis dam rheumatiz in the back of my head, and my shouldaers, go ver far away!'

'Rum toddy, a little cayenne in it, eh?'

'Yes, I sing it shall be some room toddee!'

'What'll it be for you, dad?' continued the girl.

'Rum, old *Jamake*, of course, hot as thunder, and sweet as you are my gal!' replied old Circle, and the attentive daughter hurried away to *fill* her orders.

We will leave these men, and even let the night slip on without any further records of them.

It was the afternoon of another day. In her little basement, front sitting-room, sat Mrs. Annie Abingdon. Her little child was playing at her feet with a large assortment of toys,

doubtless supplied by his fond father, who was not in sight. The mother was engaged in some needle-work, and as she stitched away, she hummed over a favourite song. Indeed that beautiful woman looked to be the very picture of happiness and contentment. Suddenly the child paused in his play, and seemed to listen with deep interest for a moment, to a sound which came faintly to his ear. At first, it was like the distant rumbling of carriages, then as it seemed to grow louder, the child arose from the floor and ran across the room to the front door, where he again paused and listened. The sounds became more plain—the face of the little fellow brightened up, and a flash of pleasure illuminated it.

‘Oh, ma, *dear* ma,’ he cried—‘the soldiers are coming. Oh, hear the drums! Do let me go to the door!’—and now the full burst of music from a brass band came sweeping through the air.

As the little fellow spoke, he raised on his tip-toes and managed to open the door. His mother had hardly raised her eyes from her work, but as she heard the spring of the latch, she cried:

‘Don’t go out, my dear. ’Tis too cold for you.’

‘Only to the door, ma, to see the soldiers!’ said the child, and ere she could answer, he had gone out to the steps which fronted the house.

‘As he stood here, he saw the gay uniforms, flaunting banner, and burnished weapons of a company of city volunteers; and then as they came up, his eye fell upon the crowd of children who were rushing along to see the soldiers. He was completely carried away with the music and the glitter, and almost unknowingly he straggled on with the rest. He had not gone very far, when a kind-looking lady spoke to him.

‘Whose boy are you, my child?’ she asked in kind tones.

‘I’m Willie Abingdon,’ said the little fellow, while he looked up at her with a mingled look of curiosity and fear at being spoken to by a stranger.

But her smile was very kind; and when she took him by the hand and led him into a confectionary near by, and bought him some candies, his conquest was made, and he really for the moment forgot his mother. It is true that this lady, who was so kind to him, had dark eyes, hair, and skin, all of these very unlike his mother’s, yet she, like the latter, had a soft voice, and a very kind tone.

After she had supplied him with candies, and given him a very pretty little sugar horse, the lady took him by the hand, and led him out into the street. The soldiers were gone—the crowd had passed on. The little boy could hear the distant sound of the receding music—but his thoughts were now of home—he wished to hurry there, to show his mother his pretty presents. A carriage stood in front of the door, a very

a handsome carriage, with two large fine-looking horses attached to it.

'Oh, what pretty horses!' cried the boy, clapping his little hands together with pleasure as he looked upon them.

'Do you think so, my child? Does not the carriage look pretty, too?' asked the lady.

'Oh, yes, ma'am, it is very pretty. Oh, how I'd like my ma to have one like it!'

'Would you? Don't you want to take this to her?'

'Oh, yes, ma'am, if it was mine, I would! Is it yours?'

'Yes, child! Do you want to ride in it?'

'I'd like to, ma'am, but I can't. I must go home,' replied the boy, with a manner which shewed that the ride would indeed be a pleasure to him.

The lady noted this, and her dark eyes gleamed strangely bright, as she saw it.

'Come with me, and ride home in the carriage, my little pet!' said she.

The boy did not hesitate—he let her lift him into the carriage, and as the driver closed up the steps, she cried—'Home first—to the boat next! Be quick!'

The driver mounted his box and drove rapidly off, while the woman, INEZ GENLIS, clasped the beautiful, stolen child in her arms.

At the very moment when that carriage, with its closed pannels, and drawn curtains, passed the door of the Abingdons, that poor child's mother was standing on the door-step, looking up and down the street for her child. That child was within the reach of her voice, and she knew it not. She had not missed him until the sound of the music and marching men had gone by, and she thought that he might have gone up stairs, or back into the kitchen.

Running back to the latter, she called to Katrine, her Dutch servant girl:

'Katrine, is Willie with you?'

'No, ma'am! He ish not pe here since I wash clear up de table!'

'Oh, Heaven! What can have become of him; run up stairs, look in every room for him! I'm so afraid he has got off into the street, and will be lost.'

The servant hurried up stairs, and again the mother went to the front door, and strained her eyes up and down the street, looking for her lost one. But it was in vain. She rushed back into the sitting-room, only in time to meet the servant, who could not find the child up stairs.

'Oh, Merciful Heaven! he must be lost!' moaned the mother, in agony—'run Katrine—run down the street, and

ask everybody you meet. I'll go up—Oh, what shall I do? what will Edward say?

With her cheeks pale from terror—her eyes streaming with tears, the mother snatched up her hood, and without waiting for her shawl, rushed out in search of her child. The servant also went out, and as they did so, forgot in their hurry even to shut the door.

Twenty minutes later, Edward Abingdon returned from down town, in an omnibus. As he reached his door, he was astonished to see it left standing open on a day so cold, and more surprized when he found the sitting-room entirely deserted. The man-servant was not there—he called for Katrine, and she too was absent. He did not know but his wife might have taken the child, and gone into a neighbour's house for a few moment's visit, but at the moment when this thought struck him, he saw the little fellow's cap and cloak, and he knew that his Annie was too careful of her babe, to take it out in such severe weather, without being well wrapped up.

He hurried up stairs—went into every apartment and called upon the names of his wife and child. But his only answer came from the echoing walls.

He hurried down stairs again, for he began to be really frightened, and he had more reason to be when he met his wife who was just staggering in through the door, as he re-entered the sitting-room.

'Oh, Edward—our child!' she screamed, and fell forward fainting in his arms.

'Annie, dear Annie, speak; tell me what is the matter!' cried the husband, but he spoke to one as senseless as a marble statue.

He hastily laid her down upon the sofa, and poured water freely over her face. He kissed her again and again, and tried every means to bring her to. But it seemed impossible. He however poured some of the water in between her lips, and then she showed some signs of returning consciousness. Her eyelids began to quiver—next, her lips slightly opened, and a feeble sigh was breathed.

The husband renewed his exertions, and soon her eyes opened upon him.

'Oh, Heaven! Dear Edward, our poor child!' she murmured.

'What of it, Annie? Where is he?'

'Oh, I cannot tell—I have looked everywhere, Edward! The last I saw he stood in the doorway, to see some soldiers who were passing. In a moment he was gone from my sight—Oh, God, I fear he is lost!'

A flood of tears came now to relieve her heavy heart, and while her husband raised her head to his bosom, he said:

'Do not feel so bad, dear Annie. The child may have

wandered away, but he will surely be found. I will advertise for him, and send out searchers.'

'God in mercy grant he may be found!' murmured the mother—'why has not Katrine returned?'

'Is she out looking for Willie?'

'Yes; I sent her one way, and went the other myself. Oh, Edward, what shall we do if he is lost?'

'Trust to God, and use every exertion to find him, my love. It will do no good to despair!'

'It is true, Edward. I will try to be more womanly. Oh, how truly you spoke when you said that sorrow might come, and that it is best ever to be prepared for it.'

At this moment Katrine returned, of course, without any knowledge of the child. Leaving his wife in the care of Katrine, Abingdon hurried out to adopt measures for a search. Although he had been more calm than his wife, he had as deeply felt the loss; but for her sake he had restrained and concealed his fear and anxiety.

CHAPTER XI.

'WELL, Gus., how are you this evening? Up for fun? Anything on hand, eh?' cried Harry Whitmore, not more than an hour after the last scene between Gus. and Angelina, had occurred. The two met just in front of the CAFE DE MILLE COLONNES.

The brow of Livingston was contracted, and his voice stern and gruff, when he answered:

'No! I have been fairly bluffed off by that little stuck-up thing, the sewing-girl!'

'What! driven off the track, entirely? you don't mean it, Gus.!'

'I do mean that she has bluffed me off, but as to my leaving the track, that's another thing. By foul means if I can't use fair, I'll have her yet!'

'Well, go ahead, old boy; but you don't use the right means, my lad. Do things as smoothly as I do—you are too rough. A woman must be coaxed—you can't drive her half as easy as you can a mule.'

'I tried coaxing,' replied Livingston—'I took her and her mother from a cellar, where they were living poorer than church mice, and furnished two rooms for them, and paid the rent in advance.'

'Well, that was all right, but did you at once go to making love?'

'Yes. I couldn't help it. That girl has driven me mad!'

'I should think so, by your actions. You ought to have

been the disinterested benefactor, for at least a week or ten days. In that time, you might have won her confidence enough to have got her to ride out with you, then your way would be easy enough !”

‘How?’

‘Why, to have driven her to Leonard-Street, or down to Madame I’s, to call on a *friend*. Once inside the door, she never could help herself.’

‘That’s true, Harry. You have a natural talent for these things, which I can’t acquire. Don’t you think of any way that I can work now, to get hold of her?’

‘Yes, a dozen.’

‘Name one and the best, “an thou lovest me, Hal.” I should have advised with you at first !’

‘Of course, you should. But, for her—let me see. Do you think she knows anything about the Leonard Street dens?’

‘No, I don’t believe that she has any true knowledge of these places, or the people that live there. She is verdant upon nearly all subjects—’

‘Except that which she bluffed you off on !’ said Harry, laughingly interrupting him.

‘She is particularly verdant on that, or she would prefer my offers to the life of toil and suffering which she endures. But, that plan of yours, Harry. Let me hear it.’

‘Just let Jule, or one of her girls send and hire the girl to come to the house to sew. When you get her in there, make her your own.’

‘But she and the old woman will raise the devil with me. They’ll make a fuss, and get Matsell, or some other keen-eyed magistrate on my track, and then will come a trial, which of course will be *heralded* to the world if I don’t lay down black mail enough to buy twenty black females at the Orleans price.’

‘No. You needn’t fear that. The girl when once ruined, would keep silent for her own sake. You’d have every thing your own way, when you had completed your designs.’

‘By Jove, I believe I would ! Give me you for a planner, yet, Harry.’

‘I’m full as good in executing as I am in planning !’

‘That is true; and by the way what puts you into such good spirits?’

‘Nothing more than that I’ve been as lucky as you have unfortunate.’

‘What ! You don’t mean to say that you have succeeded already in that Meadows case?’

‘No, not exactly succeeded, but I have everything sure. I do these things more calmly and deliberately, but far more certainly than you. I follow the tactics of Aaron Burr !’

‘I should say you did ; especially in your deliberation and

perseverance. I've heard old men say that Burr never laid his eye upon a woman whom he was pleased with, that escaped his snare !'

'That is true; nor have I. But let's go in out of this, and take a *smile*. It is too cold to stand here talking.'

As the two went into Pinteux, Harry continued :

'Which way were you bending, Gus., when we met?'

'I was going up town to meet Bill Lord, Butcher Bill, Ned Shorter, and some others of *the* boys, to have a round. I was mad and intended to get these fellows out on a bender, and then to raise a muss somewhere. I'd like to see a fight to-night—I would, by thunder !'

'Well, don't let me be any draw-back to your laudible intentions or patriot-ick wishes.'

'Ah, Harry, you're a wag, always punning. Who said anything about raising an Irish row. I'd rather see those boys in at Pete's on the Points, than anywhere else. 'Twould do you good to see them knock the darkies round. Niggers stand an almighty sight of beating, you know !'

'Yes, if you don't hit them on the shins—but what'll you imbibe? The lady behind the bar is waiting.'

'Punch—old Monongehela, hot !' replied Livingston, at the same time smiling most benignly upon the bar-maid, who of course returned it, for she smiled on all customers.

The beverage was mixed, a ditto was done for Harry, and soon they disappeared where many of their spiritual relatives had gone before.

'Where are you bound to?' asked Gus. in turn of Harry, as the latter drew on his right hand glove after paying for the liquor.

'Well, I *was* about to drop down to Carlton's to see if any of the boys were there; or in at Jack Harris' to pass off an hour or two—but if you feel like taking a round, I'll go along, I've nothing particular on hand.'

'Where's Charley Meadows, to night?'

'He's sick; he hasn't got over that Carlton scene, yet. I suppose he'll be all straight though, before long.'

The two now left the bar-room, and we will answer to the reader that last question of Livingston's. Where is Charles Meadows?

At the very hour when they were speaking of him, the unhappy young man was seated before his writing-desk in his little chamber at home. His face was pale—his whole appearance ghastly. A partly finished letter lay before him—he had paused and seemed to be trying to settle his mind down upon some dark and desperate thought. He had crushed the quill pen, with which he had written, between his teeth, and had unconsciously drawn his sleeve over a part of his writing, and made it but an illegible blot.

Taking the spoiled pen from his lips, and dashing it upon the floor, he arose and commenced pacing the room. As he did so, his thoughts were expressed in audible soliloquy.

‘It must be. I am dishonoured enough now—I had better die than plunge myself deeper into crime! Yes; one touch, one instant can end my present misery but—’ and that young man trembled as he spoke—‘there is a *future*! Oh, God, to me earth is now a hell; if I die there is but another hell waiting for me! Oh, misery! *misery*.’

He paused and looked around the room. Upon his toilet table lay many a neat little article made by his young sister’s hand—the room had been arranged by her. On his reading-table lay a bible presented by his fond mother. But too seldom had he opened its leaves. While he looked upon these, the thoughts of his contemplated suicide came up again.

‘Oh, God! Can I leave them?’ he murmured—‘and yet rather than live to see them suffering from my disgrace I would die a thousand deaths. I cannot, will not survive it—and it must be found out. The books may be examined in my absence—yes, by the heaven whose laws I am about to break, *I will do it!*’

He stepped hastily across the room, and opened a small dressing-case. From beneath a paper in its bottom, he took a phial and as he held it up between him and the light, his wild eye read in large letters on the label,

“BE CAREFUL—PRUSSIC ACID.”

‘Careful!’ said he, and he laughed wildly—‘very great cause have I to be careful. A few moments more, and care will be all over for me!’

That young man was calm now, even as if he had been about to take a glass of wine, or some pleasant cordial. His face was deathly pale, his lips blue and cold, his eyes dilated, but brilliant, more so even than when we have seen him under the horrible excitement of the gaming table.

He walked to the table, took up another pen, and wrote a few more lines in the letter which lay there.

‘There is no need of a seal or direction there,’ he said, ‘they will learn all but too soon.’

Then he arose, took the deadly phial in his hand, and went to the bed-side. He laid himself calmly down, uncorked the phial, and raised it to his lip.

Oh, why did he tremble then—pause in the fearful act, and spring from the bed!

He heard his sister’s voice, cheerfully singing as she came up the stairs. The next instant he laid down the phial on the mantel-piece, for her hand was on the door latch, and her sweet voice paused in its song to ask:

‘May I come in, dear brother?’

'Yes, Isabella!' said he hoarsely, 'come in. I was about to retire, but you can come!'

She opened the door, but as she looked at his ghastly face, she cried:

'Oh, my poor brother—you are worse, you are very sick! Do let me send for the doctor! I must call mother!'

'No, Isabella, stay,' replied he,—'I am a little unwell, but it is only a headache. I soon will recover from it.'

'Oh, dear brother, I fear not. You don't know how sick you look!'

'No matter how I *look*, sister. Let me judge my health from my feelings. You may go and make me a cup of tea, if you will!'

'Yes, dear Charles, anything to do you good. You have toiled so hard, dear brother, lately, but you shall not do so much longer.'

'No, I do not *intend* to!' said he, with an emphasis which of course she could not understand. She hurried away to make his tea, and once more he was alone.

Again he took up the poison. He regarded it a moment steadily—then dashed it into the ash-pan beneath the coal-grate.

'I cannot leave her and my mother!' he said. 'I will do this last villany for Carlton, and raise funds enough to leave this land for ever, and to take them with me, where they cannot hear of my conduct. I will *hope* on, and not let despair again drive me to this pitch of madness.'

CHAPTER XII.

It was cold, drizzly and dreary on the morning when Angelina and her mother left their room in Leight street, each carrying a bundle, on their way to their intended abode, the Brewery.

Down to the 'Points' the two helpless females trudged, and when they got there, they found everything very still and quiet, for people who carouse and revel all night, and thieves who labour in the night, are apt to sleep late.

They paused before the Brewery, and as they looked up at the dirty walls of the immense building, Angelina sighed and said:

'This is the place, mother!'

'Well, child, it doesn't look so awful bad after all!'

'No, not on the outside, mother, but they say it is a dreadful place when you get in. But *he* won't follow us here!'

The mother was about to make some reply to her child, but was interrupted by a short, fat, very red-faced, vulgar-looking

fellow who stood on the steps of a room which was used as a 'grocery' in the front of the house.

'What ar you arter? D'ye want a room, wimmen?' said he.

'Yes, sir,' responded Angelina—'we are looking for a place to live!'

'Well, my clunk o' beauty, you've spotted the right place and run afoul of the right feller, if you've got the dust to pay your rent. I'm the agent of this ere 'stablishment, I am!'

As the fellow spoke his form and face fairly puffed out with the importance of his situation.

'We want a room, sir, and we are willing to pay for it,' said the poor girl, timidly, shrinking from the rude gaze of the coarse, vulgar fellow.

'Well, you can get it—let me see—I've three left. Where'll you have it, up stairs or down?'

'We do not care, if it is only quiet!' replied Angelina.

'Not hard to please, eh? Come along, and look at 'em!' and as the man said this he led the way around to the entrance at the side of the house known to us in a former chapter, as murderer's alley.

He passed in and paused at a door about midway of the passage.

'There's a room on the second floor here, as is empty,' said he—'and you can have it for fifty cents a week, payable in advance, invariably.'

'Let us see it, sir, if you please,' said Angelina, who seemed in this case to take the business all upon herself.

'Sartainly! Walk up ladies and suit yourselves. Our prices range from twenty-five cents up to one dollar!'

Angelina and her mother followed the man up a narrow pair of creaking stairs which were so thick with dirt that they seemed to walk upon sand, until they reached the second flight, where the man kicked open a door on his left hand.

It opened into a narrow stall, lighted dimly by one window, which had been smashed out of glass. There was a fire-place in it, but scarcely a sign that fire had ever been there. In one corner lay a small heap of stuff which once had been straw, but now it was as 'fine cut' as Mrs. Miller's tobacco, and looked as if the mice had been resting in it for years.

No furniture at all was in sight.

The daughter gazed at it in silence, but the mother after one look, cried:

'How *can* we live here, child! It is dreadful, we can't stay here—we'll die!'

'Better *die* here, mother, than live in vice, though the dome of a palace sheltered us!'

'True child—very true. But *can* we live here?'

'Yes, mother, wherever God pleases to send us. We are his creatures—not our own!'

'Well, wimmen, will you take the room !' asked the agent.

'Yes—we will take it, but we must have wood and food !' replied the girl.

'Well, lay down the dust—change, I mean, and then consider the room your own !'

The mother drew out her purse, which by the way, was made out of the toe of an old stocking, and handed him the fifty cents for the rent.

'All right,' said he ; 'now, if you want fire-wood, or any thin' to eat, just come down and take it.'

'Thank you, sir, we must have both fuel and provisions !' replied Angelina.

'Well, my gal, just come down and get what you want. I'll sarve you right, never fear—as long as you 'ave the money to pay for it. My store is close underneath, where I was standin' when we first spotted each other.'

'I'll come, sir. We *need* many things,' said Angelina, tearfully, for she thought of the good things which her mother had left behind her.

The man left the room, and Angelina followed him, with some change, to get a few necessary articles.

These he supplied her with, at a very low price—for things *must* be cheap here. Then she returned to her mother, and the two tried to arrange their little room. One of the large bundles which they had lugged down, contained their bed-clothing, and though they had been obliged to leave their cot-frame behind, by the help of some straw which Angelina bought of the agent, they managed to make a very comfortable bed-place. A small fire was lighted in the little hearth-place, and as far as such a place *could* look cheerful, this did. Angelina had worked with a gladness in fixing these things, which surprised her mother, for the young girl felt that her persecutor would not dream of following here, and this one great danger so absorbed her mind, that she feared or thought of no other—though many and terrible ones were now around her. Of these she had no knowledge, therefore, was as secure in her own mind, as if they were not.

We must have work now, mother !' said Angelina, we, shall have to work very hard now, for this room will be very cold without fire.'

'Yes, child—but we've some money left; take to-day, at least, for rest.'

'I will until to-night, mother, for I fear to go out in the day-light, lest I should meet *him*. But when night comes, I shall go down to the store and get more work.'

The mother was interrupted in her reply by a heavy knock on the door.

The daughter trembled from head to foot.

'Oh, God, it may be *he*—if it is, do not let him in, dear mother—save me as you love your child!'

A coarse female voice outside, soon dispelled this fear of the poor girl, for it cried :

'Is anybody lives here, sure?'

'Go open the door, mother—it is some poor Irishwoman!'

said Angelina, ceasing now to tremble, and still standing in the farthest corner of the room.'

The mother unfastened the door, which was closed by a hasp and staple on the inside, and as she did so, a large, red-faced, filthy-looking woman entered. Her dirty neck and great flabby bosom were almost entirely uncovered—her dress was ragged, and so scanty in its skirt, that she exposed large swollen legs and ankles, stockingless, and full of those festering, disgusting blotches, called rum sores. A pair of old cast-off men's shoes were on her feet, but the toes looked for daylight through numerous openings. She had nothing on her head save a very scanty quantity of grizzly, uncombed hair.

As she came in, she nodded her head, and cried:

'The agint tould me that some new neighbours had come, and I've come to say, how d'ye, and visit yez. Me name is Missis Haggerty, and it's meself that's a lady born and bred, only it's a little poor I've been lately!'

The widow and Angelina looked at the strange woman, but neither of them spoke; between their fear and disgust, they were speechless.

But Missis Haggerty was not to be put off in her visits.—She walked into the room, and with her red and swollen eyes, looking Angelina rudely in the face, said:

'An' it's a purty face yez have got, miss; I'll be bound that ye've lots o' lovers!'

'No—I never have any,' replied the poor girl, feeling that she *must* speak, and not offend the strange visitor.

'Niver have ony: Och, an' it's yerself that's a bloody fool, then, wid yer purty looks. Yez could make lots o' money.'

The girl shuddered, but did not reply. The woman continued:

'Is it a bit o' baccy ye'd be after givin' me to fill my pipe wid?'

'We have no tobacco; we never smoke!' replied the widow gathering a little more courage.

'Niver smoke? Why it's yerselves then as don't know what a blissed life is. You've a mere drap o' gin for a poor sick crater, tho'?'

'No, we never drink, either!'

'Not drink gin, sure!' exclaimed the woman, and her face seemed to try to express both astonishment and contempt.—'Why, I thought yez wor Christian wimmen, an' ye're no better

than haythens ! Maybe yez have a saxpence about yez, that ye'd lind to a poor woman as is a lady born, for wid it I can have a drink an' smoke !'

'I've no change less than a shilling,' replied the widow.

'Then give me the shillin' jist, an meself 'll git it changed for yez.'

The mother took out her little stock, and picking out a shilling, handed it to the woman, but she did not mark how the eyes of the sick woman glared at the little handful of change which was left, even as a beast looking upon its prey.

But she took only the shilling, as she did so, saying :

'It's meself that 'll niver forget yez. I live yer nex door neighbour, an' it's often I'll come an' see yez. I'll no let yez be lonesome, for yez ar Christian folks, for all yez don't drink or smoke. I'll do that same for ye, whinever I can raise the dust !'

After she said this, the woman hurried away to get her gin and tobacco, while the widow closed the door again.

'I knew it would be horrible—but yet this is better than his persecution !' murmured poor Angelina, as she sank down upon their little pallet of straw, to which the mother also came.

'Let us try and sleep, mother ; we will work to-night after I come home from the store !' said Angelina.

The mother only replied by bursting into tears, and putting her arms around her child's neck.

'Don't weep, mother. It is wrong to cry. Do you not remember my song—never despair ? The cloud is always the darkest where the bright lightning is about to break forth. God cares for us—let us trust to Him !'

'We will, my angel child, we will ; but this place is horrible !'

'Hope, faith, and love, will make the dearest place bright, mother. Now *do* stop crying, and let us sleep in each other's arms, as we so often have done !'

'But that dreadful woman may come back.'

'The door is fastened, mother.'

'So it is, child. I had forgotten that.'

The mother now ceased to weep, and, interlocked in each other's arms, they went to sleep.

CHAPTER XIII.

It was but a few moments after the night had set in—in fact, it was yet twilight. Tremblingly as she crept down the narrow stairs, and out through the filthy, horrible-smelling alley,

poor Angelina started for the store of her employers to get work. Once out in the street, she ran as fast as her feeble limbs would carry her; for now the streets were full of men and women, and strange sights and stranger sounds met her ear as she hurried along.

When she arrived at the head of Beekman Street, she turned off to cross into Nassau Street, down which her way led to her employer's store; but as she stopped to wait for an omnibus to pass, the light of the lamp above her shone full upon her, and one of a party of young men who were on the other side saw it.

'By thunder, there she is! On her trail once more, and curse me if I leave it!' shouted the young man; and, as he hurried across the street, his companions shouted—

'Go it, Gus! The devil catch the hindmost!'

Poor Angelina heard that voice, and, with a wild shriek, turned and rushed through the open gate into the park. On—on she fled, but she heard his step close behind her. Her limbs trembled under her—her breath grew short. She saw a female dress before her, and rushing up to its wearer, while she clasped the dress, and fell to the earth, shrieked:

'Oh, save me—save me from him!'

'What's the matter, my little chick?' cried the gruff voice of one who before had spoken to her, and the terrified girl recognized in it her former protector, Big Lize.

'Oh save me once more! Look, *he* comes!' and as the young girl spoke she pointed to Livingston, who was already close upon them.

Drawing back the poor girl with her left hand, as the villain came within her reach, Lize planted a blow between his eyes which would have knocked down an ox. It left him perfectly senseless.

The woman then took the sewing-girl by the hand, and led her out into Broadway.

When she got under a lamp, she paused and looked Angelina in the face. As she did so, the memory of the other scene came up in a moment.

'Why, is it you? How comes it, that when you are in trouble, I'm always near?'

'I know not, but Heaven will bless you as I do, for saving me from him?'

'Blessings! blessings!' murmured Lize—'Oh, gal, you are innocent yet, keep so—keep so!' and her eyes filled with tears, as she bent over the sewing girl, and kissed her.

As she did so, Angelina returned her kiss fervently, and while with one arm she clasped her neck in gratitude, with the other hand, she tried to wipe away the tears which streamed down the cheeks of the woman. Suddenly the eye of the

latter glanced upon the ring which was on the girl's finger. She looked at it closely, then almost screamed :

'For the love of God, tell me where you got that ring !'

'It was my father's !' replied Angelina.

'Your father's ? Oh, God ! *girl, who are you ?*'

'Who am I ? What is the matter—why do you clench my hand so hard ? You hurt me ! Why do you stare at me so wildly ?'

'Girl—if you love your God, answer me one question ! What is your family name ?'

'My father's name was Lindsay—James Lindsay !'

'Oh, God, is it so ! Are you yet pure—yet free from that damning, fearful taint which is sinking me into hell ?'

'I don't know what you mean. I never have done wrong—I *never will.*'

'Thank God ! thank God ! If I am miserable, you yet shall be happy ! I am—but no, I will not tell you now. Another time, and I will !'

PART THIRD.

CHAPTER I.

'Where do you live,' continued Big Lize, still grasping the hand of the trembling Angelina.

'In a place they call the Brewery !' replied the young girl.

'What ! in the Brewery and alone ?'

'No, not alone. My mother is with me and we only moved there this morning !'

'Oh, why, why did you go there where none live but beggars and thieves ?'

'Because *he*, the wretch from whom you have just saved me, followed and insulted me. We tried to hide from him !'

'The villain ! He shall no longer persecute you. If ever he dares as much as to look upon your sweet face again, I'll put him where only the devil can find him !'

The young girl drew back involuntarily as she saw how the strange woman's dark eyes flashed, and noted how hoarse was her voice when she made the threat.

Lize saw this and in a softer tone said :

'Don't be afeared o' me gal. I'd rather tear my own heart

out than hurt a hair of your head. Where were you going when that cove took after you ?

‘Down into Nassau street to get some work at Mr. ——’s clothing store.’

‘So you’ve arnt your living by sewing?’

‘Yes, such as it was, but we’ve had very hard work to live.’

‘Yes, poor gal, yes; I know you have by your very looks, but it shall not be so any more. You need not go to the store for work; here, take this!’

As the woman spoke she put a heavy purse into the hands of the girl.

The latter seemed to feel afraid to take it, but Lize gave her no time for consideration. She turned her around towards Chamber street, and said:

‘Put the purse in your bosom, child! Put it up and hurry along with me!’

‘Where to—where do you wish to lead me?’ asked Angelina timidly.

‘To find your mother! She must be moved from that horrible crib. You shall live there no longer. To-night you shall stay with me; to-morrow I’ll find you good rooms. There is a hundred dollars in the purse I gave you. It is yours, for I have *earned* it!’

The woman shuddered as she spoke, and while she pressed her hand to her brow, she added:

‘Yes, and eternal damnation!’

Angelina could not comprehend the meaning of this language. She both *feared* and *loved* her singular companion, for rough as was her language and wild her manner, yet had she been the poor girl’s protectress.

Lize hurried along towards the Points, still holding the frightened girl fast by the hand, and soon they turned into the narrow alley known as “murderer’s lane,” and hastened up the dark passage which led to the room where Angelina had left her mother. The stairs creaked under the weight of the large woman, but she hurried on close behind the sewing girl.

The latter paused at the door of the room, which she had bade her mother fasten on the inside, when she left, and with a trembling hand knocked for admittance.

She did not hear the expected response or question from her mother’s lips. She knocked harder, saying at the same time:

‘Mother must be asleep!’

Still no answer came from the room, and though the door had wide clinks in it, no light gleamed through them.

‘Can it be that she has gone out and let the fire go down?’ murmured the daughter, and again she knocked harder than before.

She started back as she did so, for with a creak that sounded almost like a wailing sound, the door yielded to the pressure of her hand and partly opened.

The young girl scarcely breathed. She groped her way into the room, followed by Lize, who had not spoken since they left the street.

Two steps did that poor girl take across the floor; then as her foot touched something which was extended before her, she bent shudderingly down and felt the object with her hand.

Oh, holy God! What a piercing shriek arose from her lips then—a cry expressing more agony than words ever can describe.

‘What is the matter, gal? Why do you scream so?’ asked Lize of the wretched girl, who had fallen forward on the floor,

No answer came. Angelina was senseless. The woman knelt down by her side, but when she reached forward her hand to raise the poor girl’s head, that hand touched a face as cold as marble. Lize in an instant felt a dreadful presentiment. She arose, and rushing to the stairway, shouted:

‘Murder! a light—bring a light here, for the love of Heaven!’

But no one heeded the cry—such screams were of too common occurrence there to be listened to by the miserable wretches who lived in the other rooms. The woman rushed down the stairs to a door which had been half open when she came up, and where she had seen a light burning. There were three or four half-naked negroes playing cards on the floor by this light, but Lize rushed in, and snatching it up returned in an instant to the room above, followed by the negroes with curses, for they thought that she had stolen the candle.

When she entered the room they were close upon her heels, but even *they*, wretches as they were, paused and fell back when they saw the scene which lay before them.

Angelina lay prostrate upon the dead body of her mother, whose face told but too plainly that she had met with a horrible and unnatural death. The eyes of the old lady were protruded from their sockets; her tongue was out, and the face was blue and discoloured. The black marks of fingers upon her neck showed that she had been strangled; her torn dress was proof of the dreadful struggle which she had made for life. In one hand she clenched a part of the stocking-foot which had been used to contain her money, but the rest had been torn away with the money. Not a vestige of clothing, nor any of the provision, had been left, even the wood which had been laid near the fire place when Angelina went out, was gone, and the fire had been totally extinguished.

Lize set down the candle and looked in speechless horror

upon the corpse for a moment, then raised the head of the senseless daughter on her lap.

'Water,' she cried—'go bring me some water ! The girl is not dead—bring water !'

One of the negroes turned to obey her, while the others crowded up closer, and with a sickening curiosity gazed upon the dead woman.

In a few minutes the negro who had gone for the water, returned with a pitcher, and Lize commenced bathing the poor girl's brow with it, and tried to force open her lips to pour a little down her throat.

At last, a feeble gasp, and then a sigh gave token of returning consciousness, and the miserable girl opened her eyes slowly. At first she only saw the face of Lize, but then her wandering glance fell upon the hideous visages of the negroes, and with a start and shudder, she turned her head away. In doing so her face was turned down where the light fell upon the distorted countenance of her dead mother.

For a second she looked steadily upon it, then as with super-human strength she sprung from the arms of the woman, and screamed :

'Oh, God ! My mother—dead ! dead ! Why do I live ! Alone—all alone now !'

'No, dear one, no ! You are not alone !' cried the tall woman, 'I will protect and care for you now !' and then, though she had tried hard to suppress her feelings, she burst into a flood of tears.

Angelina whose calmness was that produced by utter despair, knelt down without a tear, now, and raised her dead mother's head upon her knee.

'Murdered—murdered,' she murmured, 'oh, why did I leave her alone ! It is all my fault, for I brought her here to this dreadful place !'

Lize in a few moments recovered a little from her hysterical burst of grief, and turning to the same negro who had brought her the water, begged him to go and call a watchman. As the negro started to do this, the others who had come with him, all disappeared, as if they did not care to be seen by the guardians of law and peace.

When they had all left the room, Lize turned again toward the dead woman, at whom she looked with singular interest.

'Yes,' she murmured—'the gal told the truth. Them features can't be mistaken—there is my poor father's sister—dead, murdered !'

Angelina was too deeply absorbed in her own silent, heart-bursting grief, to notice what the strange woman said, and in a moment more heavy steps were heard on the stairway, and two of the city police entered, one of them bearing a lantern.

'What's been agoin' on here?' asked one of them gruffly. 'More murder in this hell-hole, eh? Who is this woman?'

'She is my Aunt; she was well an hour since when her daughter went out for work!' replied Lize.

'For *work*, she went out, eh?' said the man coarsely, at the same time moving his lantern so as to throw its light on the pale, tearless face of the unhappy child.

'Yes, for work! She is not what you take her for!' cried Lize. 'She is pure and free from guilt, she is my own cousin!'

'Well, that's rich! That is a recommend, *Lize*?'

'Oh, God, must *my* shame be thrown upon *her* too! He knows me!' murmured Lize; then as she saw that the men looked with a feeling of interest and pity on the pure-looking face of Angelina, the woman drew nearer to them, and said in earnest tones:

'So help me God, gentlemen, she is innocent and good! Poverty drove her here; they have not been here a night yet. The girl went out for work, I met her, saved her from insult, found out who she was, and came home here to take her mother and her away to a decent place, and found her, oh, God! just as you see her now!'

'It's a bad business, Lize, but you do seem to tell a straight story!' replied the officer who had first spoken. 'But, old gal, this must be looked into. The crowner 'll hold his inquest, and you and the little gal 'll be wanted. We'll have to jug you for to night!'

'Oh no, do not take me from here—let me watch by the side of my dead aunt. I'll not try to go away, indeed I won't! One of you can stay and watch with us. I have money to bury her decently!'

'I don't see as there'd be any wrong in that!' said the other officer, 'I'll stay here and keep her and the gal, while you go for the crowner, and report the murder!'

'Well, Jem, let it go so. But we must try to find out something about the murder, so's to try and catch whoever did it!'

'Leave that to the Justice, mate, we've enough on our hands now. Look there, that ere gal's agoin' to faint!'

The officer sprang forward in time to prevent the poor girl from falling to the floor, and for a few moments busied himself in trying to bring her to. He succeeded at last, and now, for the first time since she had entered that dreadful room, she burst into tears.

The stern men turned their heads away, but it was to hide the hot drops of sympathy which coursed down their own rough cheeks.

Angelina now for the first seemed to see them, for she sprang from the floor and as she gazed at them, shuddered from head to foot, and cried:

'Who killed my dear mother? Take me too!'

'Poor thing! Poor thing!' muttered the men, wiping away their tears. 'Don't fret: it can't be helped now; but we'll find out who did it and have 'em hanged!'

The girl saw by their tears that they were friends and her fear subsided, but her grief grew yet more wild.

Big Lize now tried to console her, though her own voice was nearly stifled with sobs.

'Don't cry, gal,' she said, 'don't cry! You're not alone. I'll be a mother to ye. You shall never work again, I'll keep you like a lady as long as you live!'

'Work,' murmured the young girl, 'oh God! to call my mother back to life I would work my fingers to the bare bone! Oh, mother, mother, why did I leave you!'

'It wasn't your fault, child, don't take on so! I'm nigh mad now, for God's sake don't fret!'

The young girl did not reply: she seemed almost choked with sobs, and could not speak.

Leaving his lantern with his comrade with advice not to let any one enter or leave the room, the watchman who had proposed to go for the coroner, departed on his errand.

CHAPTER II.

SEVERAL days had elapsed after the loss of little Willie Abingdon, and his parents still mourned bitterly for him. They had searched everywhere through the city; had advertised in all the papers; but their efforts to gain tidings of him had been vain.

Oh! how many a fearful dream had his poor mother, waking and sleeping, in which his fate was pictured.

Now, in her wild fancy, she saw him wandering off until he reached some one of the many piers which jut out into the rushing river's tide; she saw him looking over into the eddying water, then reel forward, fall and sink amid the bubbling waves.

Again her fancy would paint him alive, but it was only to see him ragged and filthy, thin and half-starved, led along by some vile, professional beggar-woman, passed as her own child, beaten to make him cry, starved to make him haggard, and used as a bait for misplaced charity.

She had heard of these things, which are but too common in the streets of our metropolis, and her tortured imagination pictured even this for her darling and only boy.

In consequence of this she gave orders to her servant girl to detain every beggar that called to ask food or other alms, that she might question them.

A few days after the child had been lost, Katrine, the servant, hurried into her sitting room, and told her that a beggar-woman was at the door—one who had two children with her.

With a beating heart the miserable mother hurried to the door, to see the beggar, herself. With anxious eyes she glanced at the two ragged, wretched-looking little children, but neither of them at all resembled her lost boy.

Giving the dark-hued woman who led them a bright half-dollar, she asked :

‘Are those your children, good woman?’

‘Si—dey is mine!’ said the woman, with a strong Italian accent.

‘But your eyes are black, theirs are blue.’

‘Mine husbant be Inglesa,’ muttered the woman.

‘Have you, in any of your wanderings, seen a little boy, a blue eyed child, with curly hair?’ asked the mother.

‘Eh? I not know the Inglesa talkee varee much,’ replied the woman.

‘I have lost a little boy,’ said the tearful mother, endeavouring to speak very plain, so as to make the woman understand. ‘I have lost him, and I will give one hundred, yes, a thousand dollars, to find him!’

The eyes of the beggar-woman sparkled brightly as she heard this, and she seemed to understand such English very well, for she repeated :

‘Loss your babee, eh?’

‘Yes, my little boy. If you can only find him, I’ll give you a great deal of money. You need never beg any more!’

‘I no can find. Fortune teller veree wise, can tell everything!’

‘A fortune teller?’ cried Mrs. Abingdon, willing to grasp at every chance to hear of her lost one. ‘Can this person tell me where my child is?’

‘Si! She can tell ev’ry tings!’

‘Where does she live?’

‘Gif me five dollare, I will say!’ replied the woman.

In a moment the purse of the mother was opened, and the money paid.

‘She live in a leet house corner of Grand an ——— street. Ask for Julia, de ole Ingum woman!’

When she said this, the beggar turned away and again the mother returned to her room.

‘If my husband were to hear of this,’ she soliloquized, ‘he would call me superstitious and reprove my folly. Yet I will see this woman. I will try everything to recover my poor boy. But I will not tell him, unless I find out something by her!’

This was early in the afternoon. In an hour after, Mrs

Abingdon, closely veiled and alone, left her house to go to the place designated by the beggar.

She did not see that the very same woman, dressed a little differently, and without the children, had stood on the opposite side of the street when she left her house; nor did she observe that this woman, with hasty steps preceded her, going in the same direction, but much faster, probably for the purpose of giving information of her coming.

Mrs. Abingdon hurried along until she found the house, where upon knocking, she was admitted by a black dwarf, a hideous-looking wretch.

He led her into a dark room where a tall woman stood, whose hue, features and form, all seemed to tell her derivation. She was evidently an Indian.

In each corner of the room the frightened mother saw a large black cat, the eyes of which seemed to glare at her with fiendish and unnatural brightness as she entered.

The Indian woman stood before a table—a singular shelf, put on a tripod of legs, when Mrs. A. entered, and appeared to have been busily engaged in looking over a dirty pack of cards, but upon the entrance of her visitor, she pointed to a chair, and in a deep, hollow voice, said :

‘Sit ! I saw thee in my cards and know thy wish !’

Trembling with fear and excitement Mrs. A. sat down, and then asked :

‘You say you know my business, what is it ?’

‘He was a beautiful boy, you loved him very much !’ said the woman, still fumbling over her cards, without looking up.

‘Oh, God, you *do* know it !’ gasped the mother.

‘Aye ! Why should I lie ? You would see your lost child !’

‘Yes—oh for the love of God ! tell me, does he live ?’

‘Julia cannot speak until her palm is crossed with gold, bright gold !’

In a moment the purse of the mother was drawn from the pocket, and though there were half and quarter eagles in it, she picked out an eagle and handed it to the woman, who stretched out her long, bony, skin-dried fingers for it, and clutched it as a hungry maniac snatches at food.

Then she turned, and taking up four black balls from the table, threw one at each of her cats, without speaking. In an instant the animals came and crouched down at her feet.

She then commenced fumbling over the dirty pack of cards, mumbling over some strange, unintelligible words all the while, and finally let one of the cards drop as if unintentionally among the cats. In a moment, each of these sprang back to her corner, one of them carrying the dropped-card in her teeth.

'The child is alive!' muttered the woman!

'Oh, thank God! But where is it—can I find it?' cried Mrs A., whose reason seemed to be carried away by the singular proceedings of the fortune-teller, and now apparently believed in the use and truth of the mummery.

The Indian woman again fumbled over the cards, with the same gibberish that she had used before, but without calling the black cats to her aid. After a few moments she spoke.

'I cannot say. It is beyond my art—the fates will not tell me; but there is one, my master, in this city, he can tell, aye, can show you the boy!'

'Who is he—where can I find him?' asked the mother, trembling still more with anxiety.

'He is one who exercises his mystic art for few, and is very secret!' replied the woman. 'Before I can tell you—you must swear to be secret, and to obey the directions which are given you!'

'I will swear, I will do everything to regain my lost child!'

'Then, if you would go to see your child in the magic glass of GENLIS the Gipsy king, and to hear of its fate, when the moon leaves its first quarter, four days from this, come to this place. A carriage will take you to him. But he is a king—his charges are princely. You must bring five hundred dollars in gold as an offering to him, and you must come alone. Come as soon as darkness gathers over the earth?'

'I will come!' murmured the mother, and then finding that she could learn no more from the Indian, she hurried away.

When the lady was gone, Genlis himself stepped out from behind a dark curtain which concealed the entrance to a small back-room, and with a smile, said:

'You did that very well, indeed, Julia! Keep that eagle for yourself. This game is turning out even better than I hoped. She takes the bait famously!'

The haggard old Indian woman took up the yellow ten dollar piece, and with a smile which looked more like a grin than anything else, consigned it to a leathern purse which she drew from her bosom, and which from appearance and sound as the eagle was dropped into it, seemed to have 'more of the same sort' in it.

CHAPTER III.

WE left Charles Meadows in a sad state in the eleventh chapter of our last part. Though he had broken the bottle of poison, still his mind was verging on despair.

His sister was absent but a short time from him, and when she returned, she brought him up some hot tea, which she had made. Her mother also returned with her. She anxiously asked how he was.

'I am better now—I *was* a little feverish, but I am better' I think I will go out and take a walk—the night air will cool my head!' replied the son, sipping a little of the tea which his kind sister had prepared.

'Oh, do not go out, *dear* brother,' said the latter. 'You are too weak and ill!'

'Isabella,' replied he, I am the best judge of my own strength!' Then as he saw a tear-drop fill her eye, when his tone was so harsh, he lowered his voice and in a more kind manner, said:

'Forgive me, *dear* sister! I have become petulant with this fever—I mean no unkindness. I think it will do me good to go out!'

'Well dear brother, if you think so, I can say no more. If I did not love you, I should not feel so anxious!'

'I know it, Isabella. You are a good, dear girl!'

The young man sighed as he gazed upon her. Perhaps he was even then thinking of the disgrace which would fall upon her if his crime became known; but little did he dream of the fearful peril which she was in. He did not know that the libertine, Whitmore, had almost completed the fatal net which was to ensnare her; that the toils were closing fast around her. Poor girl! Unsuspecting as the timid antelope, upon which the ambushed hunter has fixed his deadly aim, she, fearless in her very innocence and ignorance, was carelessly sporting on amid the bright flowers of hope, and the gay pictures of her own happy fancy.

Dressing himself in his outer garments, so as to bear the chilly air of the night, the brother kissed his mother and sister, and departed. When he left, he told them that he would be back early—that however they must not sit up for him, as he carried his night key, and could enter without disturbing them.

It was not the fashionable hour for the gambling operations. As *gentlemen* always decline *drinking* before dinner; so do gamblers decline *playing* before supper, and the supper table is never set before ten, even in the most plebeian establishments.

In an upper room of Mr. Carlton's establishment, were two persons, at the same time that Charles Meadows left his door.

One of these was Carlton, the other, his confederate in villany, Sam Selden. The subject of their conversation, was the unfortunate Meadows.

'Do you think he'll do it?' asked Selden of Carlton, in re-

sponse to information from the other of the proposed robbery and forgery.

'Do it!' replied Carlton, in a tone of surprise at the supposition of failure, expressed in the question. 'Do it! yes, I'll wind him up so close that he would not dare to refuse me anything! No, not were I to bid him commit a murder!'

'I don't see how you can get him into a fix so hard as that!' replied Selden.

'Why, Sam, I thought you knew me better! To-morrow' he will be in such a pickle with old S—— that he'll *have* to come to me to get him out of the scrape, and then, before I give him any aid, I'll make him sign a confession of his own guilt, aye, and a bond to do whatever I ask of him!'

'But how will you get the suspicions of S—— awakened? How will you get Charley into a scrape?'

'Read that,' replied Carlton. 'It will be in the hands of S—— by noon to-morrow,' and he placed a letter in the hands of Selden.

The latter took it and read aloud:

"Mr. S——is advised to look pretty sharp after his head clerk, one in whom he may repose too much confidence for his own security. A young man who frequents houses of ill-fame—bets largely at the faro-table, and gives large supper parties on *eight hundred* a year, needs watching. This caution is given to Mr. S——by a
FRIEND."

After reading it, Selden looked at Carlton with surprise.

'Well,' said he—'you are smarter than I thought. When the old man raises a fuss, you'll lend Charley the dimes to make all his stealings up?'

'Yes, on *conditions*!'

'He will agree to anything to save his name from disgrace.'

'To be sure he will, and then when he has proved by his books and *cash* in hand that this letter is *slandrous*, old S.——will love him more than ever, and we shall have a fair sweep at every thing!'

'That's true. You have a grasping mind, Carlton.'

'I have *one* mind, Sam, and that is to be as rich as John Jacob Astor before I am fifty years of age, and then I'll go to Mexico or South America, kick up a revolution, and found a kingdom for myself, as Aaron Burr intended to do!'

'If you do, I hope you'll make me your prime minister?'

'A *prime* minister you *would* make, Sam! But wouldn't you rather be the Secretary of the Treasury?'

'I thought that you'd hold on to that berth yourself?'

If Mr. Carlton intended to respond to Mr. Selden's remark, it was cut short by a tap at the door.

Carlton arose and unlocked it. One of his servants handed him a card. He glanced at it, then, with a smile, turned to Selden.

'Speak of the devil and he's always on hand,' said he. 'I wanted to see this fellow before I sent the note to S —, and here he is.'

Then he bade the servant show Mr. Meadows up. At the same time he put the anonymous letter in his pocket, and directed Selden to retire into another room by the back door.

'You may as well go in and play a game of chess with Hannah, to pass off the time for an hour,' said he. 'My wife must be dull, for the hour is past when she sends the child to bed.'

Selden left the room, and the next moment Meadows entered by the front door.

'Ah, how d'ye this evening? Pale yet, I see, but better than when you left?' exclaimed the gambler, extending his hand.

The young man took it with an involuntary shudder, then, as he sunk feebly into a chair which Carlton placed for him, he replied:

'I'm better, but very weak!'

'Yes, so I see!'

The gambler rung a small hand bell which lay on the table. It was answered by the appearance of the mulatto servant, who figured in the eleventh chapter of the first part of this work.

'Eliza, bring some of that wine which is in the back-chamber cupboard! The long-necked bottles, sealed with green wax!'

'Yes, sir,' replied the girl, hastening to obey her master's order. In a few moments she brought in the wine and glasses. After opening the bottles, she obeyed a sign made by her master, and left the two gentlemen alone.

'Take a little of this wine, it is very fine. Osmond never imported better, and his stock is acknowledged to be A. 1.'

Meadows swallowed the wine quickly and held the glass to be refilled, but did not speak until the second had passed his lips.

'It's good wine. I feel a little better, I was faint when I came in,' said he.

'So I observed,' replied Carlton, 'but as you are better, may I ask why I have the honour of your company! Did you think of trying your luck again?'

'No; I am broke, flat broke! I haven't a dollar left!'

'But you can get more!'

'I fear not. I've had the devil in me since I saw you. I've been absent from the store, and if the books have been looked into, and the cash account reckoned up, I am a lost man!'

'No—not so! Have you forgotten our conversation of the other morning? I promised to help you if you got into a scrape!'

'Yes, on condition that I should lunch deeper into crime!'

'But it will be more safe for you. Your agency in the matter will be unknown!'

'I cannot do it,' replied the young man. 'I cannot bring myself to ruin the man who has ever proved a kind friend to me!'

'Do you think he'd hesitate to prosecute you to the full extent of the law, were he to find you out?' asked the gambler. 'Do you think he'd pause one moment to consider of your disgrace and the misery which your imprisonment in the penitentiary would bring on your mother and sister?'

The wily Carlton had touched on the right chord. Meadows turned pale when he heard those mentioned who were so dear to him, and he gasped:

'Carlton, you have me in your power! If you save me from disgrace I will do as you wish!'

'Very well, then—I will pledge myself to let you have money to the full amount of your defalcations at any moment when it is needed. But you must at once take wax impressions of every lock in your establishment, for me. You can keep your books up as if you had the cash, which you have drawn and lost, in your hands. If the old man asks any questions, just put him off, and come to me for the money. If he charges you with any thing, put on the *innocent indignant* to the highest!'

'I will do all that I can, but were it not for my poor sister and mother, I'd blow my brains out first!' replied Meadows.

'Thereby making an ass of yourself,' said Carlton, with a sarcastic smile. 'I never hear of a man committing suicide, that I don't think of the old adage, "bite your own nose off to spite your face!" 'It does not save a man's character to destroy his own life—it only leaves it entirely defenceless, liable to every slander which malice and enmity can invent. It leaves a blot upon his name and family which the tide of a thousand years cannot wash away.

'But we'll quit the subject. It's not very pleasant, as the Irishman told the priest, who was warning him of his danger in the world below. Take another glass of wine, Charley!'

'I will, and go home. I must go to the store in the morning, and I tremble at the thought of it.'

'You need not. I'll see you safe through your dangers.'

Meadows now returned home, and the gambler descended to his hell.

CHAPTER IV.

A FEW moments only before Mr. Carlton advised Sam Selden to go in and play a game of chess with his wife, Eliza, the mulatto girl, had come into Mrs. C.'s room with a note.

The lady received and read it. While she was perusing it, various expressions, both of pleasure and pain, went and came on her expressive face. After she had read it, she refolded the note and placed it in her bosom, then asked the girl :

'Did Mr. Cooly give you this himself, Eliza ?'

'Yes, mistress,' replied the servant, who, unlike her sex and class generally, did not seem at all talkative, only using so many words as were barely necessary for a direct answer.

'Did he say any thing ?'

'He bade me be very careful, madam, and said that he thought we were watched.'

'So he hints in his letter. Did he tell you of any circumstance that made him think so ?' continued the lady.

'He said that a gentleman who boards at the same house with him, and who is about his size, came in at eleven last night, and just as he turned to go up the door steps from the pavement, a man who had stood in the shadow of the house, stepped before him, and, looking him full in the face, asked his name. The gentleman gave it—the other muttered something about that "d—d Cooly," and went off.'

The lady listened to this relation of her servant, and then replied :

'He may be watched, but I don't think so. He is too timid ; it is strange to me how I can love him so dearly, when I cannot but see that he is a coward at heart !'

A low tap was heard at the door.

'Go and see who is there, Eliza,' said the lady, quickly seating himself again, and placing herself in a graceful attitude.

The door was opened and Mr. Selden entered.

His bland smile disclosed his beautiful teeth, and he bowed low as he said :

'Good evening, madam. Your husband had company, and fearing you would be lonesome, asked me to come up and play a game of chess with you.'

'My husband is *very* kind !' replied the lady.

Selden noticed the slight tone of sarcasm which she used, but he wished not to have her think so, and replied :

'He was certainly kind to do me an honour ; but perhaps you do not wish to play !'

'Oh, yes, I am perfectly willing. I was doing nothing, except reading, when you came in.'

'May I ask what work ?' said Selden, glancing at the table

by which she was seated. There was no book upon it. The lady saw his look, but was not at all disconcerted, for she instantly replied :

‘I was perusing Lady Montagu’s Letters. Eliza took the volume to my chamber to change it, the moment before she heard your knock.’

‘Ah, yes!’ said Mr. Selden, a little confused. ‘That Lady Montagu was a strange woman.’

‘A very independent one, I will allow!’ replied the lady. ‘She had mind enough to think for herself, and sufficient courage to express her thoughts.’

‘Therein very much resembling Mrs. Carlton,’ said Selden.

‘I do not know whether you intend me a compliment or not;’ said the lady, ‘but in the letter which I last read, I remember a verse which you and my husband might very aptly take home to yourselves.’

‘Indeed! may I hear it?’

‘Certainly—or read it, if you like. It is in a letter to the Countess of Mar, No. CXLV. in Sharpe’s London edition of her Letters, and if I remember correctly, is :

‘The *man* of love enraged to see,
The nymph despise his flame;
At dice and cards misspends *his* nights,
And slights her noble game!’

I believe it is very *near* the original, and I am sure’ its *appropos!*’

‘You are very hard upon us, lady; but if you are the nymph and despise the suit of your lovers, is it not enough to drive them to play?’

‘But I have only *one* lover—my husband. You surely do not place yourself on *my* lists, and I a married woman!’

‘Lady, a peasant may love his Queen, even as he can look up at a bright star in heaven and worship it!’

‘Yes, and he may lose his head by his presumption!’ said Mrs. C. in a tone of deep meaning. Observing that her answer a little confused the elegant gambler, the lady added :

‘Let us quit this nonsensical talk and commence our game; I expect you will be more at home in that than in making love!’

‘Perhaps so, but I would like to take lessons in the last, if *you* would become my teacher!’ replied the gambler.

‘Sir, I am astonished at your remark! Are you not my husband’s friend?’

‘Yes, lady, but more friendly to you than him, as my conduct proves!’

‘How, sir! explain yourself!’

Because, madam, when I am aware that you receive and read other *letters* than Lady Montague's, I hide the secret in my own breast, instead of arousing an already jealous husband by the report !'

The lady blushed up to her eyes. She felt that he knew something—how much, she dared not think. She was not aware that the letter which she had but half concealed in her bosom, could be plainly seen, so low was the dress made at the neck.

His eye had rested on it, and he made the remark at haphazard, which her confused manner at once told had struck home. Following up his advantage, he added :

'You need not fear me, lady, but at least in future treat me with a little more kindness. Do not act with me as if I were a slave, born to be trodden upon by you !'

'I shall ever try to treat Mr. Selden with courtesy !' replied the lady, who now began to recover her self-possession.

'Do not call me *Mister* Selden with such a haughty air !—Hannah Carlton, I *love* you ! Do not treat me with such coldness !

As he said this, the gambler attempted to take her hand but she withdrew it, and in a firm tone, said :

'Mr. Selden, I will dispense with your company ! Were I to tell my husband of this insolence——'

'He would very soon be informed who the more fortunate lover *is* !' said the gambler, with a bitter smile.

'If you will not leave the room, I will !' said the lady, indignantly ; and, suiting the action to the word, she arose, and passing into the chamber, slammed the door to, and locked it behind her.

'By the Hand that made me, she shall pay for this !' muttered the dark-browed man fiercely, as he arose and strode out of the room.

CHAPTER V.

Two more days of hopeless misery for our poor sewing-girl—the bereaved and unhappy Angelina. The poor girl had seen the disfigured corpse of her mother laid beneath the frozen ground in this time, and she had been led before a coroner's jury, and also to a magistrate's court, to give evidence in regard to the horrible murder.

The jury could only render a verdict of, 'came to a violent death by the hand of a person or persons unknown,' &c. ; the sagacity of the magistrate was put at fault, and all the satisfaction which the poor girl could gain, was to hear that she

was *pitied*. Justice was indeed too blind to search out the murderers.

Angelina was in a bad place, for one who was pure and virtuous, for it was neither more nor less than the panel-crib of her new-found cousin. Yet, for the time at least, Lize had dropped her usual business, and with as much kindness as if she had been a human creature, once possessed of a *soul, heart*, and the other attributes which elevate the human being above the animal; even as kindly as if she had been a *Christian*, she had devoted herself to consoling the almost heart-broken orphan. We could not be so entirely *unfashionable*, so totally *unworld-like*, as to insinuate that this depraved and fallen female could possess the same feelings which *others* feel, but they were *very* like!

Yet were we to say they were the same impulses which actuated her, that would be felt by those of 'the world' who had not become depraved, we would be laughed at. We judge so, from observation, from noticing how these hapless creatures are treated by the world—driven from post to pillar by the lash of scorn, given no opportunity for reformation, but *forced*, once having fallen, to remain so.

Why this is we cannot divine, yet it is too plainly to be seen. There are hundreds in this city who are heart-sick of vice and its miseries, who with a kind word and helping hand might be drawn from the fearful gulf into which they have been plunged, frequently by the perfidy of men, often, very often by poverty and temptations which poverty and suffering could not withstand.

The writer, though young, has had the experience of much travel, he has visited many of the large cities of the world, both at home and abroad, but never in all his cruisions has he seen a wider and a richer field for the noble-hearted and God-sent philanthropist than in this city.

But novel-readers, we believe, are not fond of such digressions as these. We will resume the thread of our story.

It was as we said, a sad place, that panel-crib, for Angelina; but Lize had so far avoided letting her cousin know how she lived, though the poor girl had gathered from a former conversation with her mother, that the cousin had fallen into depraved habits.

It was the second day after the murder, and night had come on. Lize was sitting beside her pale cousin, talking to her of hope and future happiness, when a low whistle was heard, which seemed to come from another room at the back of that where they sat, and was yet so close that it might have been in the very same room.

The young girl started to her feet, and trembled from head to foot, while she looked around to see where the sound came from.

'Don't be afeard, gal !' said Lize, quickly—'It's only a signal from my pal ! But you don't know what that means, gal. Just sit down and don't be scared. Nothing shall ever hurt you, where I am !'

Again the whistle was heard, and more plainly this time. Angelina heard a noise as if a board had been drawn along the floor behind her, and turning quickly around, saw that a part of the ceiling of the room had been removed, and a small, very genteelly dressed young man stood in the opening.

The poor girl was too much frightened to scream, she stood and trembled in speechless terror.

'What d'ye mean, Charley, by scarin' this poor gal, so? Why couldn't you have come in through the front door, like as if you were on the square !' exclaimed Lize, in an angry tone.

'Cause this 'ere vay vos the 'andiest,' replied Cooper, the pickpocket, for this was he ; 'but who is she?'

'She's my cousin, and a good girl, and you needn't patter no flash afore her, for she don't understand it !'

'Ow long 'ave you 'ad her?'

'Ever since you went on to Boston—her mother was killed down on the "Pints" a day or two ago.'

'Down to the Pints, eh? And you call her a good gall, Lize ! I didn't think you vos so *green*.'

'Blast your eyes, Charley, you're jist as bad as the rest !' You don't think anything *good* can be akin to me ; and because this poor gal's mother was killed the first day that poverty drove her down into that hell-hole, you think the gal must be as bad as I am !'

'I didn't say *you* was bad, Lize ; you needn't go for to get mad with me now !' said the man, considerably put out by her quick and angry reply.

'Then just go away and leave us alone till to-morrow night !' replied the woman, 'to-morrow I'll get a better boarding-place for her !'

'I wish you would,' replied the man, 'cause this 'ere losin' time, isn't vot its cracked up to be ! Ve wants to use the crib ; ve 'ave done so little this week, old Jack 'll be as cross as a bear with a soar 'ead !'

'Well, tramp now, and come agin to-morrow night ; do, Charley, that's a chuck !'

'I will in a shake ; but 'avent you got summat vet in the locker?'

'There may be a drop o' brandy there—go and help yourself !' replied the woman.

The pickpocket crossed the room to a small cupboard, and, opening it, took a black bottle from an upper shelf, which having uncorked, he tipped into a tea-cup which was before

him. Taking a hearty sip of the brandy, he corked and replaced the bottle, then saying :

'So long, till to-morrow night, old gal !' he turned and left by the same way he entered. The moment after he went out, the panel was slipped back again, and the ceiling looked just as it had before, even as if it was solid and immoveable.

During all this time, Angelina had been staring around her, and at this strange speaking man, without daring to utter a word. But when he had left the room, she buried her face between her hands and burst into a flood of tears.

'Oh, let me go away from this dreadful place !' she sobbed ; 'I cannot stay here !'

'You shall go away, gal, as soon as I can find a good, respectable boarding house for you !' replied Lize, soothingly, 'but you needn't be afraid while you *are* here !'

'Who was that strange man, and how did he get *in*, that way ?' asked the girl, still sobbing.

'I can't tell you all, gal. He is an old friend of mine, and them panels are made on purpose to slide back.'

'But what for ?' continued the girl.

'Don't ask me, child—don't ask me, for God's sake !'

Angelina ceased sobbing, she wiped away every tear from her cheek, and looked the large woman full in the face. The cheek of the young girl was white as the leaf of the magnolia, and her thin lips too were pale and bloodless. Her eyes alone were bright, even brighter than they had been ere her care was so great, her sorrows so deep, for she was even then suffering with a burning fever.

But she seemed to possess strength as she arose to her feet, and looking Lize steadily in the face, exclaimed :

'I *cannot* stay here any longer. My mother once told me that you were bad—that you had broken your poor father's heart and——'

'Gal ! gal ! for the love of God, spare me !' cried the woman—'I am bad, but don't *you* pour fire into my heart. I have tried to be good to you—God knows I have, and I'd sooner endure the torments of hell eternally, than to harm a hair of your head !'

Tears rolled down her flushed cheeks, and sobs choked her utterance.

The tender heart of Angelina was touched—in an instant she reproached herself for her cruelty to one who had been so kind to her, and clasping Lize, who had knelt at her feet, to her bosom, she wept with her, and cried :

'Do not weep, *dear* cousin ! Forgive me for hurting your feelings, but I was nearly crazy. I did not know what I said. Oh, forgive me—I was cruel, and you have been *so* kind, dear, *dear* cousin !'

'*Dear*, oh, God bless you, gal, for that kind word. Kind

words don't often fall on my ear. I'm used to curses and abuse, but I couldn't bear to have *you* blame me !

'I will not again, cousin. I never will speak so again—I never will ask you questions again !'

'You shall have no need to ask 'em gal ; I'll tell you all now, for you know too much, not to know *all* !' replied the woman, becoming more calm.

'It will pain you cousin, you need not tell me !' replied the young girl, in a kind tone.

'No, don't try to stop me now, I must tell you, gal. This is a panel-house, and I have led a bad—bad life for many a year. I did drive my poor father e'en a'most mad, and he went abroad, God only knows whether he is yet living—I fear not !'

The woman paused—the big tears rolled down her cheeks, and occasionally a heavy sob seemed to come up from the very bottom of her heart. As she became calm once more, she continued.

'You don't know what a panel house is?'

'No,' replied Angelina, 'I never heard of one before?'

'Well, gal, I'll tell you a little story, you musn't blush or get scared, for I tell it to you for a lesson. It'll explain what a panel crib is.

'There was a woman walking up past the Astor House the other night ; she was dressed up right smart, and what with paint, and false curls and all that, looked very enticin' like. She saw an oldish looking cove standing on the steps of the hotel—a man with grey hair and a rather reddish face, but he was dressed well, and looked as if he toted dimes about !'

'*Toted dimes* !' repeated Angelina, not understanding the expression.

'He looked as if he had money,' continued Lize. 'Well, there he stood, looking up and down the street, just as if he didn't know what to do with himself for the evening. Well, this good-looking woman caught his eye as she went past, and she looked up at him with a quiet kind of a smile, as if she liked the looks of the old cove. He seemed to be a little flattered by this, and when he saw her look back after him, when she had passed, he just started on up the street after her. She had got away up to Florence's, before he overtook her, and then he walked a little way close behind her—but when she got beyond the bright lamps, he walked on past her, till he got nearly up to the next corner, looking back once in a while, to see her face. Well, she seeing this, couldnt help smilin,' and then he fell back close alongside of her and said :

'"*It's a fine evenin', Miss !*"'

'"*Yes, sir, very—but I am not a Miss !*"' said the woman, as politely as she knew how.

"Indeed!" said he, "why you are too young to be married!"

"No, sir, I've been married nearly a month!" replied the woman, and she sighed heavily as she said this.

"What do you sigh in that way, for?" said the old gentleman, still walking along with her.

"Because I'm not happy!" said she.

"Not, happy? Isn't your husband kind?"

"I don't like to talk about him!" said the woman, and again she sighed very heavily.

The old gentleman pretended now to feel a good deal of interest for her, and began to ask her a great many questions.

She finally told him that her husband treated her very bad, and spent all his money in grog-shops, and had gone away to Jersey that day, without leaving her a cent or anything to eat; that he was a fighting, crazy fellow, who'd kill her if she complained, and she'd walked out because she felt too bad to stay in the house. The old covey was very particular in asking her when her husband would get home, and she told him that he wouldn't get home before the next night.

Well, then, he began to pity her very much, and told her that he had money and would help her and be kind to her. People call that same cove one of the wisest men in the United States; but he was fool enough to tell the woman his name, and the high situation which he held, and she was struck dumb almost when she knew who it was that had picked her up, and was talking to her. She never had thought before, that the voice which had chained the attention of the assembled wisdom of the nation, should be heard pattering soft talk to her, but so it was.

Well, to make the story short, after a good deal of talk, he persuaded the woman to let him see her home, and when he had got to her door, he invited himself in. After awhile, he persuaded her that he might as well sleep there, as at the Astor House, and she after crying a little, kind of consented, but went out of the room, while he went to bed.

The old covey went and stowed himself away, and left his clothes on a chair, close by the ceiling, where she had set it, when she went out. He hadn't more than got covered up, when he heard a tremendous knocking at the front door, and heard a man with a very gruff voice, cursing and swearing and calling to be let in.

In an instant the woman rushed into the room, and said in a tone of terror:

"Oh, mercy me! What shall I do—it is my husband!"

Well, the old covey was scared *some* then, I reckon! He jumped out on to the floor, and while he hurried to put on his clothes, he asked:

"How can I get out? Is there no back door? I wouldn't have him catch me and be exposed, for the world! How *can* I get out?"

"There's no way except the window, and it opens out into a muddy alley. The mud is knee deep?" answered the woman.

"It's no matter, open the window! Anything but exposure!" cried the old man, taking his vest, coat and hat in his hand. Then, as she raised the window, he got his rather portly frame up into it, and in a moment dropped through. The woman listened a moment, and heard him crawling along through the filthy alley, and then went and opened the front door and let in the person who had been knocking so hard.

"When he came in, he had a smile on his face, and said:

"Well, old gal, wot's the swag? Wot 'ave you lifted?"

"She took a big, greasy-looking, leathern pocket book from her bosom, and a gold watch.

"Hopen the dummy, and let's see wot's in it!" said the man.

"She opened the pocket-book, and found seven hundred dollars there in money, and a lot o' papers.

"She looked over the papers, and after reading them, said:

"These here are't no use to nobody but the owner, we'll send 'em to him, at the Astor, through the post!"

"Then they looked at the thimble!"

"The thimble?" asked Angelina, who, in spite of her feelings, had become interested in this story.

"The watch, gal: *thimble* means watch! They looked at it, and found it a thirteen jewelled, doubled-cased, regular Tobias; so that it turned out the woman had made an eight hundred and fifty dollar haul. She had lifted it out of the old man's pocket, through a sliding panel like the one my pal came through, and the old covey had been too scared to look in his pockets, till after he got out of danger!"

"But why didn't he come back with police, when he found he had been robbed?" asked the young girl.

"D'ye think he didn't care no more for his character, than to have it known that he had been robbed in a panel-house, by a common street woman that he'd picked up? If he had lost seven thousand instead of hundreds he would have kept mum about it. How do you think he would like to have seen a paragraph in the Herald or Sun the next day, announcing that the Hon. ———, had been robbed of seven hundred dollars and a gold watch by a courtesan!"

"But this story is not true, cousin!"

"As true as gospel, gal! I know where the watch is; and it didn't happen very long ago!"

"And what became of the wicked woman?"

"She's here along side o' you, gal. Yes, shame that I should

say it, gal, I am the same one—and have been a panel thief this five years !’

The young girl shuddered involuntarily, and drew back from the side of the woman; but when she saw that the action was noticed, and evidently pained Lize, she took her hand again, and in a kind tone, said :

‘But you won’t do so any more, cousin, will you. Do lead a good life, now, and God will bless you for it !’

‘I will try to, gal, indeed I will !’ replied the woman—‘I’m sick of doing wrong, and it’s in my heart to be good, but it’s very hard to get a decent living after you’ve once made a slip !’

‘Why is it—can you not work ?’

‘Yes, gal, I would gladly work, but no one will employ a gal that has been known to do wrong. But I’ll try to quit this life, if I can only get away from the gang !’

‘The *gang* ? What has that to do with you—how can it keep you from being good ?’

‘Because, gal, I’m in their power. If I was to leave ’em without the consent of all hands, they’d blow me for some of my work, and I’d be sent up !’

‘*Blow you ? Sent up ?* Cousin, I cannot understand you.’

‘Well, gal, it’s because I’ve been so used to pattering flash with thieves, that I forget how to talk in Christian language. To “blow” would be to *tell* of some of my stealing ; and to get me “*sent up*,” means to get sent to the States Prison ! If I was to leave my gang, without they’re willing, they could give me a great deal of trouble !’

‘I hope then that they will let you go, cousin, for I would rather work night and day than see you here, leading such a dreadful life !’

‘God bless you, gal ; you’re a living angel, you are !’ responded the woman, raising the girl’s hand and kissing it fervently, ‘I will live right ; and I’ll work too—yes, I’ll work to help you along.’ Then after a moment’s pause, Lize looked at a watch which she drew from her bosom, and said :

‘You’d better go to bed, gal ! It’s latish now, and we want to go to bed so as to get up early to go and look up a boarding-house for you !’

Seeing the girl look timidly toward the part of the ceiling which contained the panel, the woman added :

‘Don’t be afeard, gal ! There shall no harm come to ye !’

‘I am not afraid—I will pray and go to bed !’ replied the pure orphan.

‘Pray for me, gal, pray for me ! I dare not pray for myself !’ cried the woman, as she saw the young girl kneel ; and there she sat and wept, while her cousin prayed to the Father of the orphan.

CHAPTER VI.

ISABELLA MEADOWS sat alone in her mother's back parlour. A note was in her hand, and a few, quiet tears were trickling down her cheeks. They did not seem like the droppings of sorrow, but more like the dew of a joyful heart. Yet a flushed cheek, lips slightly pale, and hands which trembled as they held the letter, spoke of an agitated mind—a heart fluttering with excitement, perchance with pleasure.

Her low-toned soliloquy must explain her true feelings.

'Dear, *dear* Harry!' she murmured, as she kissed the letter, 'he *loves* me, I know he does, else he would not be so anxious to marry me. He says it must be this night. So soon—and then so secretly. It makes me tremble. There seems an awful responsibility in making these vows, which once spoken must never be broken until death.'

The young maiden paused a moment and seemed to consider; then again she spoke:

'How can I keep it as secret as he desires? It is hard that even my mother cannot share my joy!'

At this instant the outer door bell was heard, and she hurried to open it. He, of whom she had just been speaking, entered.

'*Dear* Henry!' she cried as she sprang to his open arms and fondly kissed him.

'I see you have received my note!' said he, glancing down at the letter which she held.

'Yes, dear Harry, and was pondering over its contents when you rang the bell!'

'Well, dear one, what do you think of it?'

'Oh, Henry, I hardly know what to say. This is very soon—and I should at least like to let my mother know of it!'

'It cannot be so, dear Isabella. You do not know the importance of entire secrecy: my grandfather is even now ill: one word from my mother would alter his will, which I *know* is made in my favour now, and if our marriage should reach her ear in any way, it would blast my prospects for ever!'

'But, Henry, mother would never betray our secret!'

'Isabella, I would not trust any one—hardly myself. I would not even tell your brother, dearly as I love him!'

The maiden sighed but did not reply. Her better spirit and the innate sense of propriety natural to her sex, was evidently combating with her inclinations. Whitmore saw the necessity of turning the balance, and, after pressing his lips again warmly to her white brow, said:

'It is useless to think any longer, Isabella. If you really *love* me you will consent!'

'If I really *love* you, Henry!' repeated the maiden, with a look of reproach, while her eyes filled in an instant with tears.

'Forgive me, dearest; I know you love me: but you *must* be mine;' urged the libertine, tenderly.

'I will, Henry—I will,' murmured the maiden, and the next moment she sealed the promise with a fond kiss.

'When?' he asked, after passionately returning the warm pressure of her pure lips. 'Shall it be as I wish, this night?'

'Yes—if you desire it!' murmured the blushing girl, and she hid her face on his bosom.

'Well, dearest, all will be ready. I have bought the ring and engaged the clergyman. He and my sister will be the only persons present!'

'Can you trust him to keep the secret?'

'Yes. He is a friend of mine—a young man who has but lately taken orders, and to-morrow starts upon a distant mission to the West. This was one of my reasons for being in such a hurry?'

'Dear Henry, I was wrong to wish for delay!'

'Well, dearest, it is all right now. You must tell your mother that you have promised to spend a week with my sister, who is a little unwell, and that you will come home to see her every day or so. In that way you can get off without suspicion. Ah, here she comes——'

The mother entered, and Whitmore, rising, saluted her warmly, as usual.

She, with kind dignity, replied to his inquiry after her health, and took the chair which the daughter placed for her.

'I have a favour to ask of you, Mrs. Meadows!' said Henry, when she was seated. 'It is that you will let Isabella go and stay with my sister for a week. Poor Maria is sick and very lonesome!'

'I am sorry to hear it,' replied Mrs. Meadows. 'Though I do not wish to appear selfish, I should be very lonesome too, without my dear child!'

'I can come and see you, and stay three or four hours every day, mother, and Charles seems to stay more at home in the evenings than he used to do!'

'Well, child, it shall be as you wish. I never wish to stand for one moment in the way of those I love, or of any plan which they may form for enjoyment.'

'Then I'll consider it a settled thing. I'll be back at sunset with a carriage!' cried Whitmore, gaily. After a few more careless words, he turned and took his leave.

Oh, how that young girl yearned to tell her mother all—to tell her that within a few hours she would be a *wife*.

A wife? Oh, little did she dream *how* she was to be

wedded; how worthless and false the ceremony would be, which she had so dreaded for its solemnity; how cold and hollow-hearted would be the vows which she should hear from Henry Whitmore's lips that evening.

Of this let the reader judge. When Whitmore left the house of Mrs. Meadows, he hurried to the suite of rooms occupied by his friend, Gus. Livingston. He found that worthy laying back on a sofa, with a glass of hot whisky punch in one hand, and one of Paul de Kock's novels in the other, seeming to be enjoying both.

He lazily arose when his friend entered, and, with a careless tone, said:

'Ah! is that you, Harry? Didn't know but it was Jim Decatur, or some other one of *the* b'hoys! How goes things? Have a punch, eh?'

'No, I've no time for that; I shall want you in that character, to night, Gus! I've got everything straight!'

'What! do you *mean* that which you were talking about this morning—the priest?'

'Yes, you must play parson—you have a black suit, and I've already got a gown and white cravat for you!'

'But, dem the thing, that isn't all that's wanted!' replied Livingston, looking down at the very questionable volume which he held in his hand—'I need a prayer book!'

'I've got that too,' replied Whitmore, taking one from his pocket; 'you needn't fear that I'd forget anything!'

'Who's going to give the girl away?' asked Livingston, who seemed particularly anxious to have everything done up in proper style.

'Herself, to be sure. You and Maria will be the only witnesses.'

'Where will the ceremony take place?'

'In the back-parlour, at Madame I.'s!'

'The old woman makes you pay up pretty high, for all this, eh.'

'Only a couple of hundred! Maria comes it the heaviest—she has a *thousand*!'

'Whew! She does take it large. How soon is the fun to come off?'

'You be there at about *seven*. Come in a coach by yourself. Here is fifty in small bills, it'll put you through for to-night!'

'Yes, I reckon, yes,' said the young fellow, with a careless drawl as he pocketed the roll of bills which Harry gave him.

Whitmore then left to attend to other matters connected with his nefarious plan, and to make arrangements at the house in Greenwich street, for the reception of his bride.

His *bride*! Better far would it have been for her, had she been the bride of *death*!

When Whitmore left Isabella and Mrs. Meadows, she commenced telling her mother of some little preparations which she wished to make before her intended visit, but ere she had finished, her brother entered.

'Why, you are home very early to-night?' said she, and then as she glanced at him, she added in a tone of alarm, 'you surely are unwell again! Your face is deathly pale, and your eyes are bloodshot!'

'It has been a busy day, and I have been worried with my accounts!' said he, but his tremulous tone and nervous manner, spoke plainly of a deeper trouble.

His mother looked with a pitying eye upon him, and while she pressed her hands tenderly upon his brow, said:

'Poor boy! You have to work too hard!'

'It will not be so, long, mother!' said the young man, and both his look and tone was wild when he spoke.

But she did not notice this, she only added:

'I hope not, my dear child. I cannot bear to see you toiling away your very existence, and that for so small a salary!'

'My salary is *raised*, mother,' replied the young man.

'Raised, my boy! what do you mean?'

'Mr. S—— gives me twelve hundred dollars a-year, after to-day!'

'Twelve hundred dollars? Thank God! we can get along so comfortable on that!' cried the mother, joyfully.

But her son did not join in her apparent pleasure—he seemed sad and gloomy. He had that day suffered a shock which he could not easily recover from. What it was, the reader will learn in another chapter.

CHAPTER II.

On the next morning after his last interview with Carlton, Meadows went to his employer's store, at his usual hour. Though he entered it with a trembling and misgiving heart, he was met by Mr. S—— with a kind smile, and his health was inquired after with a manner of so much interest, that his fears were at once dispelled. Yet his conscience was not at ease; the very kindness with which the merchant met him, added fuel to the fire of agony which was burning in his heart.

The morning passed away until near noon, and each moment brought more quiet to the mind of Charles Meadows. He had been busy in regulating his books, and had, as Carlton directed, so made out his cash account that by his books it appeared to be all in hand.

It was noon, or a little after, and the hour when he usually went to a neighbouring refectory for a lunch. Just as Charles was about to leave the store, he saw a post-man enter and hand a letter to his employer. The latter opened it, and as he did so, Charles, ever-suspicious now, saw first a flush of surprise, then signs of agitation, pass over his fine, honest face.

Meadows, however, was about to pass out, when Mr. S—— called to him.

‘I should like to see you, Charles, when you are at leisure. Here is a letter filled with very grave charges against you. I hope you will disprove them!’

‘Sir?’ said Charles, blushing up to the eyes, ‘I do not understand you!’

And yet he had heard every word that was spoken.

‘If you were going out—never mind till you come back!’ said the old gentleman; ‘but be quick, Charles, for I have some important business with you. I would like to look over your books!’

‘Oh, certainly, sir. I was going out to take lunch; I will be back soon!’

‘Very well, Charles; you need not hurry—I will go and look at your books while you are gone!’ replied the old gentleman, eyeing Charles very closely.

But the latter had now forced a calmness, which, to his too confident employer, looked like natural composure, and as he went out Mr. S—— said, in a low tone—

‘It cannot be true! He has always appeared steady, and I’ve had him so long, and treated him so well, that he *could* not rob me. I’ll not believe it—yet it will do no harm to examine his books!’

Folding up the letter with a tremulous hand, the merchant repaired to the desk used by Charles, to look over his accounts.

CHAPTER VIII.

THOUGH when Charles Meadows left his employer’s store, after Mr. S—— had spoken to him, he *appeared* calm, his heart was almost frozen with terror. He could not mistake the look or words which he had received. He felt that the dreadful hour had come, the hour when he would be ruined for ever, or choose the course which would ruin his friend and benefactor, and stamp his soul with that darkest of all man’s natural faults, *ingratitude*.

He thought but a moment as he hurried on, not toward the refectory, but to the rooms of Carlton, and that moment’s thought determined him—weak, fatal thought—to trust to

Carlton rather than obey his heart's first impulse : to confess his wrong, and abide by the mercy of his employer.

In a few moments he rushed, pallid and almost breathless, into the room where Carlton sat with Selden, both of them enjoying a glass of wine. As Meadows entered, a look of fiendish triumph gathered upon the face of Carlton, and he glanced at his companion with a look that told plainer than words could : ' my plan has succeeded—he is in my power ! '

Meadows did not notice the look, for the very next instant, before he could speak, Carlton arose, offered his hand, and in a gay tone, cried :

' Glad to see you, Charley ! You're just in time to take a glass of wine ; sit down and join us ! '

' No, sir, no wine for me ! ' gasped Meadows, in a low, husky tone, while he gasped the hand of Carlton, convulsively. ' I've no time for that ! I wish to see you alone a moment ! '

' Ah, alone, eh ? Very well. Excuse me for a few moments, Sam, I'll be down directly ! ' replied the gambler, coolly taking his glass of wine. Then as he rose he turned to Charles and said :

' We'll go up into the same room where we had our last interview, if you please ! '

' Anywhere ! Anywhere, so that we can be alone ! ' replied the young man, nervously.

The gambler said no more, but led the way to the room.

When they entered he drew an easy chair up to the table whereon ink, pens, and writing-paper laid carelessly, and motioning the clerk to a seat, said :

' Well, Charley, what's up now ? '

' Have you got the money I told you I had robbed from S— ? '

' Well, I reckon I have as *much* ! What is the sum ? '

' Seventeen thousand eight hundred and fifty dollars ! ' replied Meadows, trembling at every word.

' Yes, I've got it ; but I thought you'd take more ! '

' No ; I have balanced my books this morning, and that is the exact *deficit* . '

' But you gave credit as if you had it all in the safe ? '

' Yes, but I have not one cent there, and the old man has just demanded to look over my accounts ! Some villain has written a note to him about me ; I don't know what is in it ! '

' A note ! Who could have written it ? ' exclaimed the gambler, in a tone of innocent surprise, which was well sustained by his looks.

' I know not—do not care ; if you do not let me have the money, I am lost, ruined for ever ! '

' Don't fret, then, my dear fellow—don't fret ! I have the money here at your service—all in different sized notes

on various banks, so as not to look at all suspicious! I'll count it out for you!

'Oh, God Almighty bless you!' cried Charles, earnestly, and tears streamed down his cheeks. 'I shall yet be saved, and my poor mother and sister will not be disgraced.'

'Of course not—of course not!' said Carlton hastily. Then handing Charles a paper, he added:

'Here, sign that little document while I count out the money for you!'

While he proceeded to count up a large roll of bank notes, Charles took up the paper and commenced reading it.

'What is this?' he cried, in a tone of astonishment, before he had read half-a dozen lines.

'Read it all—read on!' responded Carlton, 'it is only a security which I want for the fulfilment of your conditions. You surely do not expect me to lend you nearly twenty thousand dollars without any security?'

Meadows *did* read it through.

'My God, sir!' he cried, in utter astonishment, 'do you expect me to sign this—a full acknowledgment of my guilt in robbing my employer of——'

'Just seventeen thousand eight hundred and fifty dollars. I'll fill up the blank I left, for then I did not know the exact sum!' interrupted Carlton, drawing the paper towards him and making the entry.

'But, Mr. Carlton, you do not expect me to sign this paper?—and, besides, here is a bond, by which I am to pledge myself to obey your directions, in case you pay this money for me!'

'Certainly,' replied the gambler, calmly. 'I expect you to sign both documents!'

'Then, sir, your expectations will be disappointed! I will not sign!' replied Meadows, with a bitter tone of desperation.

'Of course you have a right to do just as you please, sir, with your signature. But I also reserve a right to do as I please with my money!' responded the gambler, even yet more calm. As he spoke, he quietly replaced the bank-notes in his pocket-book, and putting it in his pocket, arose as if to leave the room.

'Oh, villain! Villain! Have you no heart?' cried the despairing clerk.

'I should think I had,' replied Carlton, 'when I offer to give you such a sum upon your simple promise to do me a favour!'

'Is there no other way? I will work till I die to pay you, interest and all, if you will only lend it to me!'

'There is no use in trifling, Mr. Meadows,' replied the fiend, 'you have but one way of getting the money. *Sign!*' and he pointed to the paper.

'I will not—I cannot!' moaned the unhappy clerk.

'Then I will wish you a good-day, and a prosperous trip to Sing Sing! I shall look for the Herald bright and early in the morning. Bennet will give us all particulars, I hope!'

The gambler smiled, as only *he* could smile, and started toward the door. For a moment the wretched young man stood as if spell-bound, then sprung across the room at a single bound, and fell on his knees between Carlton and the door.

'Mercy! Save me!' he cried.

'*Sign!*' sternly replied the gambler, pointing towards the paper.

'Oh, anything but that! Fiend, if you are a devil, remember that you were born of a woman!'

'Very complimentary, upon my word, especially from one who asks a favour!' replied the gambler, sarcastically, yet still apparently preserving his temper.

The poor clerk was driven to the last pitch of despair. He arose again to his feet, and while his face became more and more pale, his lips were compressed and bloodless. His eyes glared with a light far more intense than natural, his form seemed to dilate and swell into a larger size, and his nostrils expanded like those of a war-horse snuffing the battle-storm.

'I'll thank you to move out of my way, sir; I wish to go down and finish my wine!' said the gambler, in a mild tone, fixing his eye upon the maddened clerk.

'Villain! will you give me the money?'

'I'm very sorry, indeed—but can't afford to accommodate you on any other terms than those I've mentioned,' replied Carlton.

'Then, by heaven if entreaty won't melt you, force shall!' shouted the desperate young man, and as the words left his lips, he sprung at the gambler with the bound of a tiger.

But Carlton had anticipated this from his looks, and stepping a little aside, so as to avoid the plunge, reached out his foot, and tripped the other as he rushed forward.

Meadows fell heavily on his face, and the blood gushed in a torrent from his nose. Carlton did not try to keep him down, but stood and looked at him calmly, his arms folded, and not the slightest sign of agitation in his manner.

The clerk slowly arose—but his appearance was changed. The fire in his eye was gone—he was, if possible, still more deathly pale than before. He seemed to gasp for breath.

'Oh, God!' he murmured—'water—I am faint! Give me water—I will sign!'

He would have fallen again, had not Carlton caught and supported him in his arms. He steadied him back to a chair beside the table, then rang the bell which lay at hand.

Eliza, the servant girl, appeared.

‘Some water—a bowl and a napkin!’ said her master. ‘Be in a hurry—the gentleman’s nose has taken to bleeding, and he is faint!’

The servant did not answer, but hurried to obey her orders.

The basin of water was brought, also some of the same cooling liquid in a tumbler.

With as much apparent kindness as if he had been a brother, Carlton washed the blood from the young man’s face, and aided to stop the bleeding. After he had drank some of the water, Meadows began to recover, and soon was able to breathe freely and speak.

‘Too much time has been lost,’ he said, with a shudder; ‘give me the paper—I will sign!’

Carlton handed him the pen and paper. The young man took it, and without a tremor signed his name. He was calm—but it was the stillness of desperation. As soon as it was done, Carlton looked at the paper, then said:

‘You’ve no objection to a witness that this is your signature?’

‘Do as you please, only give me the money!’ replied the clerk, in a subdued tone.

‘Here, Eliza,’ said Carlton to the girl who had awaited his orders, ‘put your name here!’

The servant obeyed.

‘Now, Eliza, bring us a bottle of that old wine!’ added the gambler.

‘No wine for me:—the money, and let me go!’ said Meadows, imploringly.

‘I’ll give you the money, of course,’ responded the other, ‘but you must take a glass of wine! You look dreadfully.—Old S—— would be sure to suspect something. I’ll put a little more water over your face, and then wipe it dry.’

While Meadows was doing this, Carlton again counted out the money and handed it to the clerk, who clutched it, even as if it were some antidote for a deadly poison which he had been taking.

Eliza came in with the wine, and, after swallowing a bumper, Meadows started from his seat to return to the store.

‘Stop one moment, if you please!’ said Carlton.

‘What, is there more for me to do? For God’s sake, have I not done all that you asked?’

‘Yes, to be sure, my dear boy, but just go to the glass there, and brush your hair before you go out. You look like a fright. Calm and compose yourself, so as to carry it through bravely. Come, another glass of wine!’

‘No more—I do not need it!’ replied the clerk. The next moment he was gone.

‘Well managed, by Jupiter!’ muttered Carlton, as his victim disappeared. ‘This is what I call lending money at

five thousand per cent. interest.' And he chuckled as he took the bond and confession, and put it away in the place left vacant by the money which he had given to the clerk.

The latter hurried away to meet his employer, and it is probable that his walk, and the consciousness of having the money, made him more calm, for that he fully succeeded in quieting the fears of his employer, and satisfying him of his honesty, and the slanderous falsity of the anonymous note, is proved by the announcement which he made to his mother on that evening, when he returned home, as described in our sixth chapter.

CHAPTER IX.

It was evening, twilight, we mean, on the fourth day after Mrs. Abingdon had visited the Indian fortune-teller. Mr. A. had been absent all day on a trip to a neighbouring town, for still he kept up the search, day after day, for his lost boy. He had not yet returned, and as darkness began to come on, Mrs. A. put on her bonnet, veil and thick cloak, then calling her servant, said :

'Katrine, I am going out to spend the evening with a friend ; if your master comes home before I do, tell him not to be alarmed, I will come back in a carriage.'

The girl replied, and the next moment Mrs. A. was on her way to the Indian fortune-teller's as fast as her feeble limbs would carry her. On arriving at the house, she saw that a carriage was indeed in waiting, and also noticed that the horses harnessed before it were not matched in colour, one being dark, the other white. It looked more like a common hack, too, than a private coach.

But she did not pause to look at it, only noticing the peculiarity in a glance, while she knocked at the door which once before had been opened unto her.

The same dwarf appeared to admit her, and she next found herself before the Indian woman.

'You are here and ready !' said the Indian.

'I am, but let me go quickly. I wish to find out about my child, and get home before my husband returns !'

'You need not fear,' returned the fortune-teller. 'He will not be at home until nearly two o'clock.'

'What ! so late ? How can you tell—where is he ?'

'He is now in a small town in New Jersey. He will return by the Philadelphia late train of cars.'

'Oh, heaven ! How strange is this ! how can you tell ?'

'Woman, ask not how, only mark that which I say is !' replied the fortune-teller.

‘But, my child ; when can I go to this man, whom you call your master ?’ asked the lady.

‘Have you brought his offering ?’

‘If you mean the money, I have it here. There are five hundred dollars in that purse !’ replied Mrs. A., handing the woman a purse which was round with its fullness.

The woman took it and went behind the curtain of the back room. While she was absent Mrs. A. heard whispering, and the clink of the gold as it was counted out, but before she could revolve the reason of these whisperings in her mind, the woman returned.

‘The offering is good—the amount right,’ she said, ‘you shall now go to GENLIS, the king of all the Gipseys in America. His mirror will show thee thy boy, wherever he may be !’

‘Oh, haste then, to take me there !’

‘I will, lady, but you must first be blindfolded.’

‘Anything—anything, to see my lost Willie !’ And then the lady permitted a large black shawl to be bound tightly around her head, covering her eyes with several folds, only leaving her room to breathe freely.

The moment after this was done, the voice of a man was heard close by her side ; not a gruff or discordant tone, but soft and calm, even as gentle as that used by her own husband in his fondest moods.

‘Come, lady,’ said the man ‘take my arm and fear not ; you are under my care and protection !’

There was something in his tone even more soothing to one so nervous as Mrs. A. than the harsh tones of the Indian ; though she trembled, she clung to the arm through which he placed hers.

‘To the carriage now—it will not take very long !’ added the man, and she walked on, soon finding by the cold air that she was in the street, next finding herself gently lifted into the carriage.

Her conductor entered, seated himself by her side, and, without having received any audible orders the driver started off at a very rapid speed.

The person who sat with Mrs. A. seemed from his address to be a man of genteel manners and general information, and as the carriage hurried on, endeavoured to open a conversation. But she was too frightened to more than answer his remarks by monosyllabic expressions, and he soon became silent.

The carriage all this time seemed to be driven at a rapid rate, and Mrs. A. supposed that she was driving directly out of the city. After full an hour had passed, she ventured to ask of her companion :

‘Are we not nearly there ?’

‘Yes, within about a mile !’ replied the man, and the

carriage kept on, still jolting over the paving-stones, when from the distance gone, it ought to have been out upon some unpaved road.

For full a quarter of an hour more the carriage kept on, but at the expiration of this time they stopped.

Her conductor quickly alighted, and before he handed her out of the carriage went to speak to the driver.

She took advantage of this moment of non-surveillance to draw her scissors from her pocket, and cut a single cord from the tassel of the coach which hung on the side next to her, and to replace the scissors and cord in her pocket before the man returned.

This, though it occupied not ten seconds, was scarcely done before her conductor was again at the coach door.

'You will alight here, madam!' he said, and then he reached out his hand to assist her in doing so.

She took his arm, after getting upon the pavement, and soon judged from the absence of fresh air that she was entering an alley. Next her guide paused, and by the sound of a bell rung by him, she judged that she was at a door. She was right, for she heard the door swing on its hinges; then as they advanced she felt a carpet under her feet. In another instant they commenced ascending stairs; then after walking along a carpeted passage they descended stairs, and in a moment were in the open air again, but not apparently passing through the door by which they had entered.

'What does all this mystery mean?' asked the lady, beginning to be frightened.

'GENLIS, the King, wishes it!' replied her guide, 'do not fear, there is no danger!'

They went on; but Mrs. A. supposed by the feeling of the cold air, as well as by the brick pavement beneath her feet, that she was again in the street. Yet this was not the case, as subsequent pages will prove. But they went on and on until Mrs. A. became impatient, thinking that she had already walked several blocks.

'Have we not nearly arrived at the place?' she murmured, 'I am so tired!'

'Ten steps more, fair lady, and we are there,' replied her guide.

The steps seemed short ones to her, for she was conscious of entering a door the next moment, and after passing but a little way, found herself seated carefully on a soft and yielding sofa.

Then a female voice addressed her in a tone of uncommon sweetness.

'Are you fatigued or frightened, lady?'

'I am tired; but are we there?'

'You are in the dwelling of Genlis!' replied the voice.

‘Then let me see my child. May I take this bandage from my eyes?’

‘Count one thousand, silently but truly,’ replied the stranger, ‘then remove it!’

The lady was about to commence, when again the other female spoke.

‘You must remember,’ said she, ‘not to speak, whatever you may see, else the charm will dissolve in an instant! You would see a child, a blue-eyed, golden-haired boy, whom you have lost?’

‘I would!’ replied Mrs. A., rapidly recovering her presence of mind, with the assurance that one of her own sex was near.

‘Then,’ replied the other, ‘be calm—see, but do not open your lips! Count on, and when the thousand is told, take off your veil!’

Audibly, but with a trembling voice, did the poor mother commence counting ten hundred units. How long seemed to her the time; how slowly her powers of utterance seemed to work. But she finished.

With a tremulous hand she untied the bandage which covered her eyes. When this was done, a blaze of light, coming, she could not see from where, seemed to blind her, but either the light grew more dim, or she soon got more used to it, for she could now look around the room. It was of an oblong shape, and hung altogether with black. A chill ran through every vein of Mrs. A., when she saw this, for it at once seemed ominous of the death of her child; but ere these thoughts had time to settle into her almost fear-frozen heart, she saw at the upper end of the room, a beautiful being which looked more like an angel than a being of earth.

It appeared to be a woman, for a woman’s peerless form, her swelling bosom, tapering waist, full lips, and limbs at once voluptuous, yet delicate, were there, but too slightly hidden by a light gauze, short dress, such as is worn by the stage-dancers, even much more transparent. Woman as she was, Mrs. A. blushed as she looked, yet gazed at this beautiful vision. It did not move—it seemed to be a statue or a wax-figure. If so, it was indeed perfect. As it was turned quarter-face toward her, Mrs. A. saw that it had large, black, mournful-looking eyes, that seemed turned toward heaven, even as if in prayer; its lashes were long and silky, its hair curling and jetty black. In complexion it was very clear, yet not so fair, nor so pale as even Mrs. A. was. Yet in symmetry of figure, it was perfect.

She looked at it in silent surprise, for she remembered her warning not to speak. She then noted that it stood close to the upper end of the room, some forty or fifty feet from her, and close beside a curtain of black velvet which hung over that end of the room.

While she still gazed in silent astonishment upon this beautiful creature, a deep, heavy, but not unmusical voice was heard close beside her, saying :

‘So, this daughter of mortals would test the skill of Genlis?’

She turned quickly and saw by her side a very tall and singular-looking man, whose dress was as odd and quite in unison with his personal appearance. He was, we have just said, rather tall ; his eyes were black as night, his complexion as dark as a Moor’s (not quite as dark as the *negro* Othello’s of our present theatre), and his look stern and commanding.

The poor lady trembled as she gazed, she could not speak. She glanced again at the person—saw that his dress was of Turkish or Persian style, she did not know which, and as his face seemed to unbend its sternness beneath her fearful and imploring gaze, she gathered strength to say :

‘If you are this Genlis, the Gipsy king, do show me my child !’

‘Daughter, beware, and dare not to speak or move ! One word or motion will be enough to break the charm !’

As he said this, the strange being moved a wand which he held in his hand, and, as he did so, the beautiful vision at the upper end of the room knelt upon the floor. Then the curtain slowly arose, disclosing to the anxious mother a plain mirror—a very large one, occupying the other end of the room. When the curtain had been rolled up to the ceiling, which seemed to be done by invisible hands, Mrs. A. noticed that a kind of fog or smoke seemed fast gathering over the face of the mirror. Still she looked on, until the mirror bore the appearance of a sky, through which the white scud of the wild storm is flying. Then, when her heart had become almost still from fear and anxiety, the clouds seemed to stop, and right in their midst arose a form—the form of a young child. Oh, how she gazed at it, while yet the clouds seemed to hide some of its proportions, but in a few moments it was plainly visible.

There he stood, her own Willie, dressed in the very clothes which he had worn when she had last seen him—garments proudly made by her own hands ; there, with his glad blue eyes and bright brown hair. He seemed to look a little more pale ; but even this might have been fancy with her.

Tell a mother not to speak or move under such circumstances ! Better bid the ocean go to sleep, or the north-west blast to hold its peace !

She gazed one long, long minute. She was satisfied that it was he.

She gave one wild shriek :

‘My child ! my child ! it is my boy !’ then rushed toward the spot. As she did so, she heard a noise like the hissing of

a serpent—then a rumbling, like distant thunder. Her strength failed ! she trembled—fell to the floor.

It might have been but a minute, it might have been an hour that she was insensible—she knew not how long ; for when she recovered, Genlis, the Gipsy King, was bending over her, applying restoratives, such as are commonly used.

The curtain was still up—the angelic form still knelt close beside it, and the mirror was yet in view. But the latter was plain, nothing but the bright glass could be seen.

As she came to her senses the lady murmured—

‘Where has he gone ? Oh, it was him ! it was him !’

‘Lady, I warned you not to speak or move !’ replied Genlis : ‘you broke the charm !’

‘Then, was it not real ?’

‘I may not say, but had you remained still, you would have learned more !’

‘Oh, try it once more. I will not even breathe !’ murmured the mother.

‘I cannot now. If you would again look in the Magic Mirror, it must be at another time !’

‘When, oh, when ? I will indeed look at it again !’

‘Then be where you entered the carriage to-night, four evenings from now !’

‘I will—I will !’ replied the lady. ‘Oh, why did I speak ?’

‘It cannot now be helped, lady. The Fates willed it ; be patient and hopeful—you yet may see and recover your child, but it will be after many trials and much expense !’

‘I care not, oh, I care not, so that I once more may clasp him to my arms !’ replied the mother.

‘You shall,’ replied the Gipsy ; but it is all over for this time ; you must again be veiled and return as you came !’

‘But, why all this mystery ?’

‘Because this is a land of stern laws and great unbelief ! We must be secret ! You have sworn to keep this visit and its sights a secret, even from your husband. Pledge me the same, even as you did Julia !’

‘Why—why must I keep it from *him* ?’

‘It is enough that you must ! Promise, or you shall never see your infant more !’

‘I promise !’ murmured the woman.

The Gipsy now proceeded to veil her as before, then she was led out into the air, and after walking a short distance, replaced in the carriage. It was driven off very fast, and now there seemed to be no one inside of the coach with her. She however, did not move or speak, and for an hour the coach rattled along, while she sat trembling in it.

At last it stopped ; the steps were let down, and a man having the Irish brogue on his tongue, said :

‘You can get out here, ma’am !’

She did so, and while she waited to have the bandage pulled from her eyes, she heard the steps put up, the carriage door shut to, and then heard it rattle upon the pavement as it was driven rapidly off.

She then dared to take off the bandage herself. To her surprise she found herself before her own door. Had it not been for the black shawl in her hands, and the distant rattling of the receding carriage, she would have believed herself in a dream, but she could not. All had been but too real, and, moreover, reader, strange as is this 'mystery' it is no *romance*, as the sequel will prove; no formation of our fancy, but a true account of a real occurrence in this city. It may now appear strange and supernatural, we will see by and bye how it will look.

When Mrs. A. rang the bell and was admitted by Katrine, she asked for her husband. He had not yet returned home, She began indeed now to believe all she had seen and heard, though she never had been superstitious before.

CHAPTER X.

WHEN Carlton had dismissed Meadows, after securing the bond, he returned to his confederate, Selden.

'Succeeded?' asked the dark-browed villain.

He needed not to inquire—the look of triumph gleaming from Carlton's eyes was enough to tell him that he had not failed.

'Of course,' replied the gambler; 'when did I ever fail in any thing I tried to turn my hand to!'

'How did he act—did he take the conditions easily?'

'About as easily as a spoiled child takes ipecac. First a fit of the sullen—then a trial of the pathetic—to close up, a grand effort at the tragic——.'

'Which you ——'

'Tripped in an instant. When he found it was my conditions or no money, he concluded to sell himself. He is now my *slave*—he dare not call his soul his own?'

'By Jove, but you should have been a king—you would have lorded it nobly on a throne!' cried Selden, apparently in real admiration of the deep villany of his master.

'I would, if I had been born as the Czar of Russia, lord over the lives of millions of subjects. Then I would have *kinged* it, indeed, for there should be no *will* but *mine*, no eye that dare to gaze upon me without I willed it. Then, we would see whether I would be spurned, hated, scorned, as I am now, simply because I am a *gambler*! I can't go into the best society; why? because I am a sporting man. Men, mer-

chants and aristocrats will come here to my rooms and play with me—they will drink wine and eat at my table, they meet and shake hands with me, *here*, but when I meet them in the street, the *gentlemen* cannot recognise me. They never invite me to their houses. Though my wife is perhaps as well educated, and as agreeable as any of theirs, she never can be invited out to see them. Curse such consistency, say I; if they can associate with me at one time, I can't see why they should not at others! I don't care so much for myself as I do for the sake of my wife!

'She manages to do very well,' replied Selden, with apparent carelessness. 'I reckon she's not much at a loss for company!'

'Company, Sam? Why she hardly ever goes out, and——'

'Excepting in the evening, pretty often!' replied Selden, still in his careless tone, interrupting Carlton.

'In the evening! Why, Sam, what are you talking about? This very morning my wife told me that she was sick and tired of living so lonely—that she had not been out of the house once for ten days!'

'Indeed!' exclaimed Selden in a tone very expressive of doubt.

'Yes; do you know to the contrary?'

'Why if she *says* so, it's against my rule to contradict a *lady*, but——never mind, we'll drop the subject!' [replied Selden, still more careless in his apparent tone. Yet he was using the very means to fan the flame, to awake the sleeping jealousy of that fiery husband, and well he knew it.]

The husband looked him sternly in the eye, for a moment after he had last spoken, then, while his face grew a shade more pale than usual, if possible, and his blue lip quivered with excitement, he said in a husky voice:

'Sam, don't put the devil in me! I know that woman, but I've not been jealous of her lately—I hope I've no cause to be!'

'I *hope* not!' replied the Iago still in his quiet insinuating tone.

'You *hope* not! Sam, you mean something; yes, by Heaven, you *know* something! Are you my friend?'

'If you don't know that, and cannot judge me by an intimacy of years, my words will never satisfy you of it!'

'Right, Sam, right. Yes, I know and have often proved your friendship. I'm calm now—go on and tell me all. You know something about my wife!'

Carlton said that he was calm. He was so, calm as the full-charged storm-cloud, full almost to bursting with lightning and thunder and the sweeping wind which bows the forest; calm as that cloud when it settles down towards

the earth and hides the face of heaven from the terrified worms of mortality.

Selden saw this, and his following hesitation only served to add to the power of the storm.

‘Speak—don’t trifle with me! If you know anything about her, tell me of it!’ cried Carlton, evidently each moment more agitated.

‘Don’t get excited, my friend,’ cried Selden—‘don’t get excited, I’ve not said that I knew anything!’

‘No, you have not *said* it—but I know you do. Now, do tell me, that’s a good fellow, Sam, I’ll be calm—calm as if I was at the board with a big game on hand. See, I’m calm and quiet now; I was a little excited for a moment, but I’m quiet as a lamb now!’

If quivering lips, eyes reddened and flashing with but half-suppressed excitement, the muscles of the face twitching as with spasmodic convulsions, the hands clutched until the blood seemed about to burst from beneath the finger-nails, the whole frame of the man trembling—denoted calmness, then was that villanous gambler calm.

However, Selden had his game to play, and well did he know,—thief, murderer, wretch, libertine, accomplished as he was in all the phases of villany—how to play it. His eye, lustful, far more than that of Tarquin; his heart more cowardly in its lust than that of Iachmo; his intent deeper and his soul darker than Iago’s; his whole character so black, that if the combined iniquity of Sodom and Gomorrah could be condensed, boiled-down, and then distilled into a quantity the size of his heart, it would not be half so black, so vile, so devilish, as that heart! This is the character of the original of him, whom we have taken as *our* Sam Selden. He is a true character, as too many of our readers know, especially ladies, for he is ever on the fashionable promenades, and if he observes a lady whose beauty or manner strikes him, he is sure to follow and annoy her. We have given his description before, but it will be no harm to renew it. He is of middle size, slim, well made, always *genteelly* dressed; wears a jet black beard and moustache, has very white teeth which he is very fond of showing; a high, fair brow, a little overhanging his large, jet-black eyes. His complexion pale, his manner calm and dignified.

Fair readers, this description is given for your benefit. We know we have made out this man handsome—he is so—the serpent, which, seducing Eve from her duty to God and her husband, brought misery and wretchedness into the world, was also beautiful.

The villain is a snake—you can see it in his fiery eyes—as such beware of him, for we have given his exact description.

So much for him—the assassin, gambler, and libertine. We will now resume the thread of our story. When Carlton begged him to go on, saying that he was calm, Selden replied :
‘ I will not say a word, without you will promise me two things !’

‘ What are they ?’

‘ The first is, that you will offer no harm to your wife, whatever her conduct may have been !’

‘ Well, the second ?’ cried the other impatiently.

‘ That you will never tell her that I had anything to do with informing you !’

‘ Leave me the first out—the second I will agree to, willingly !’

‘ No, Carlton, both or neither !’

‘ Then both let it be. Now go on, and tell me all !’

‘ You will offer her no violence ?’

‘ No—no ! I have said I would *not*—that is enough !’

‘ Yes, for your word is better than your bond to a friend !’

‘ Well—well, go on, tell me all ! Is she false to me ?’ cried Carlton, his voice trembling with agitation.

‘ She told you that she had not been out for ten days ?’

‘ Yes, this very morning she said so !’

‘ Then on this very morning she told a lie. Night before last, you went out early to see some of your friends, did you not ?’

‘ Yes, I did, I believe !’

‘ You told her you could not spend the evening with her ; that you had business which would keep you out till it was time for the bank to open ?’

‘ Yes, but how did you know that ?’

‘ You told me !’

‘ Ah, did I ? Well, go on, I had forgotten !’

‘ You went out : you had not been gone twenty minutes, when I saw a female come down stairs. She was dressed very commonly ; had on your servant’s cloak and bonnet, and a thick, green veil. I thought that she didn’t look quite so tall as Eliza ; and as I had nothing to do before the bank opened, I thought I’d take a walk, and see who it was that kept her face veiled so close !’

‘ Well, well—go on, tell me all ! Was it she ?’ cried Carlton, becoming more and more excited.

‘ Just keep cool, and you shall hear !’ replied Selden, deliberately pouring out a glass of wine and swallowing it (the wine, not the glass).

He then continued :

‘ I found she hurried on up Broadway, so I took the other side and kept even with her, careful all the time not to lose sight of her. We went on in this way until we got up to Leonard Street, where she turned to cross over to the right-

hand side of Broadway. I slunk back into the shade of the houses, and she didn't see me, and then as she passed on, I followed. Before I had gone ten steps further, she was met by a man who had evidently been waiting for her, and taking his arm, walked on up the street.

'But who was this woman—was this my wife!' cried Carlton, now excited almost beyond the control of his resolution.

'Be calm, my friend; be calm, as you promised, and hear all! I *will* have my own way of telling this story!' replied Selden.

And then he continued:

'When I saw this, I shifted over to the other side of the street, and walked on—'

Did you know who the man was?' asked Carlton.

'Yes: I recognised him by the light of the lamp that stands in front of one of the five-story brick boarding-houses there!'

'Well, who is he?'

'Just let me tell my story my own way, if you *please*,' said Selden, filling himself another glass of wine, and drinking it leisurely.

'Well, go on—go on! You seem to take your time about it!'

'Yes, I generally do in everything,' replied the villain, and then he continued his story.

'I kept on up the street, a very little further back on the other side, until we got to Canal-street, and here I saw they were about to cross over. While they waited for a chance, for some passing omnibuses kept them back, I crossed over to Canal, and standing close in the shade of the brick store at the corner, watched them till they crossed over and passed me, keeping down along the north side of Canal.

'I followed now, at about ten or fifteen steps distance keeping close in the shade of the houses, and wrapping my large Spanish cloak close up around my face. They kept on until they had got to —— street, here they paused at the corner, and the lady, after a few words, passed on to the next street. The man, as soon as she had gone on, went up the west side of —— street a few doors, and stopping before the door of a three story brick-house, rung the bell. He was admitted. I then knew why the lady had gone on: there was a back entrance to the same house!'

'Yes, it was Madame ——'s, but the woman, *was* she my wife?'

'Wait till the time comes, I tell you!' replied Selden, 'hear the story my own way, or don't hear it at all!'

'Well, go on; for God's sake go on, I'm half crazy!'

The lagoon first poured out another glass of wine, then, after drinking it, continued:

'When I was fully satisfied of the drift of the game, and

saw the man whom I spotted and *knew*, go into this assignation-house, I resolved to see who the woman was, for as yet I had not made up my mind about her, though I had my misgivings !

‘Well, go on ; do make haste !’ cried Carlton, nervously.

‘Plenty of time—plenty of time ! don’t get yourself into a pet !’ replied Selden.

‘I’m not fretting, but, go on. You take things as easy as if you were preaching me a sermon !’

Selden continued :

‘Therefore, to make sure who she was, I went around to the back entrance and took a station in the shade opposite to it, across the street, and waited.

‘After I had been there about an hour, the same woman came out. I followed her and at the very corner where they had separated, he joined her again. I followed them on, and both of them kept on down Broadway till they got here to your very door, and then he parted with her in the entry way, and here, for the first time, by the hall lamp, I got a sight of her face as she pulled aside her veil to kiss him !’

‘And she was——’

‘Your wife !’

‘Great God, I thought so ! I was sure of it—but she shall die ! I have forgiven before, but——’

‘Stop, my friend, stop !’ cried Selden, laying his hand gently on the shoulder of the infuriated and almost raving Carlton. ‘You promised to do her no harm !’

‘So I did, but I made no promise in regard to *him* ! Who is he ? Tell me and I’ll have his heart’s blood before I sleep !’

‘Then I won’t tell you. If you *will* act like a madman, what is the use of my siding with you ? I’ll never tell you his name, if you act in this way !’

‘Sam, is this your friendship ? Would you have me tamely submit to this insult ; this infernal wrong ?’

‘No, of course not. But I’d have you get your revenge safely and surely !’

‘Well ; so you saw her kiss him, and she was my wife !’

‘Yes—and as I had satisfied myself on that point, I determined at first to put him out of the way. As I had no tools with me, though I do generally carry them, I went up stairs to get a brace of pistols or the knife that I used up at the garden that night, you know. While I was gone, he cleared out, home, I supposed, or up to his place. Well, I followed up there, and looked in, but he wasn’t there. So I went around to his boarding-house and waited for him. Once I thought I had him, but it turned out to be somebody else ; and after all the fellow got clear.’

‘Well, you’ll tell me who he is now ? I’m calm as ever I was !’ said Carlton.

'Yes, I'll tell you, if you'll promise to act only with me and on my advice!'

'I will: for so far you have proved a good friend.'

'Then, it is Charles Cooly.'

'What! Cooly—he whose place is in Broadway close to Leonard?'

'Yes, the same fellow.'

'Holy Heaven! this is too much! I could have borne it if she had picked out a man my superior in either looks, feelings or anything. But *he*. He is not fit for a street-sweeper. Why should she, a woman with beauty, education, talent and wit, take up with such a clod hopping scoundrel as he?'

'There's no accounting for taste,' replied Selden, in a dry tone.

'No, there is not; but this fellow shall pay for his fun with his life.'

'Remember your promises; don't let her dream of any thing, and do what you do in a way that'll keep you clear of the law,' said Selden.

'Don't fear, Sam, the worst of my temper is over now, I'll be calm,' replied Carlton.

Yet he was mistaken. The worst of his anger was not over. Anger is like fire put to good fuel: while it flames and smokes it makes a greater and fiercer show, but when the fuel is burned down into coals, how much more intense is its heat, how much greater its power.

So, noisy, flaming anger is seldom very dangerous; it is the calm, settled, vindictive kind which is most to be dreaded.

CHAPTER XL.

EARLY on the morning succeeding the night when we last described the scenes connected with them, Big Lize and Angelina started in search of a boarding-house for the latter. The young girl was very feeble, and scarcely able to walk. Her face was pale and thin; a few weeks of suffering had made sad havoc with her beauty. And yet she looked very interesting with her large, mournful-looking eyes, and her beautiful hair, which had once more been dressed with care. Her wardrobe had been much improved, too, with the aid of her cousin, who, despite her many faults, was liberal and kind; and she really looked quite decent, though very ill.

They had not far to look for a boarding-house, for signs denoting such are almost as thick here as lawyers' shingles are in Philadelphia.

Lize soon obtained an interview with the landlady, and representing herself as a working-girl at a house where they

would not take boarders, asked for board for Angelina, as a sickly cousin, who had just come in from the country.

The story of Lize suited well with her looks, for she had dressed plainly that morning, and had used neither paint powder, nor curls; therefore, when she had satisfied the landlady of her ability to pay '*weekly, in advance,*' the bargain for a room and board was easily made.

'I shall come to see my cousin every evening, and if she gets any worse you must call a doctor; I will always see the bills paid,' said Lize; 'and now, ma'am, if you please, we'll see what kind of a room you'll give her.'

'Certainly, Miss; walk up stairs and see. Three rooms vacant—two on the third, one on the fourth floor—dollar less for that; and as for doctors, we've six in the house, regular boarders,' replied the voluble landlady, at the same time leading the way up stairs.

'Six doctors!' repeated Lize in surprise—'Why, what do you do with them all?'

'Eat 'em, sleep 'em—regular boarders!'

'Eat them?' asked Angelina in a timid tone, which implied a desire not to remain under a roof where they eat people.

'That is, we feed them!' replied the landlady.

'Yes, but six doctors in one house! that beats me!' muttered Lize.

'Oh, they're young ones; they don't count much, and then they're such good company! They tell such funny stories about ghosts, and digging up bodies, and dissecting, and all that, you can't think! Why, I don't know what my daughters would do if it wasn't for them!'

By this time the landlady had arrived at the third floor, and showed Angelina one of the rooms for hire; and as it suited her very well, Lize concluded the bargain, making all the necessary stipulations in regard to fire, lights, &c.

'I'll have your trunk sent along soon, cousin,' said Lize, as soon as all was settled.

'My trunk?' replied the poor girl, remembering that she had nothing in the world save what she stood in, for those who had murdered her mother had taken the last rag.

'Yes, cousin, I will send it soon!' replied Lize; then, as she bent down to kiss her, she whispered—'I'll get you one, dear. Now, hold your tongue, don't speak, or the old woman 'll s'pect suthin'!'

Angelina returned her cousin's kiss warmly, and held her peace; but tears stood in both her eyes as the latter arose and bade her good-bye.

'Don't feel bad or lonesome, child, I'll see you again to-night!' said Lize, and then, before the young girl could say

another word, the woman turned away with the landlady, and Angelina was again alone.

Oh, how lonely she did feel when that door closed upon her! She felt that she had but one friend in the world, and that friend, who had twice protected her when in dark danger, who had buried her mother, opened her purse to her, met her with every Christian kindness, was a courtesan, a street-walker, a panel-thief!

And she was glad to have found such a protector—grateful to God for it; for she knelt down when she was alone and thanked HIM for His protection—and more, she prayed that soon, very soon, she might be permitted to follow her mother to that world where sorrow is not and trouble cannot come. Was she wrong in this? was that young, helpless, poor, yet pure girl, wrong to pray God to remove her from this infectious world of sin and rottenness, ere yet its foul disease had settled within her heart?

We will not say, but let others think as they will.

‘The first thing which Lize did after leaving her young cousin’s room, was to give more orders regarding her comfort to the landlady.

‘She’ a poor sickly thing,’ said she, ‘and must be nursed careful!’

‘She shall—I’ll treat her just like one of my own daughters!’ replied the landlady. ‘She does look sickly—poor thing, and just as if she’d been a crying for a week.’

‘She has; her mother died a few days ago!’ replied Lize.

‘What of? No catching disease, I hope?’

‘Oh, no, ma’am, it was very sudden, a kind of a strangulation or somethin’!’

‘Oh, yes, what one of our doctors calls a ——’

‘I haven’t time to stop ma’am! I must hurry home!’ said Lize, and so she escaped hearing the technical name for strangulation.

She hurried away at once to a ready-made dress store, and having taken Angelina’s measure before they went out in the morning, she soon purchased a quantity of new clothing which she knew would fit her tolerably well, and do, at any rate, until she could have her fitted out better by a regular dress-maker. Purchasing a trunk, she paid the bill, and ordered her purchase sent home. She then made many other little purchases, such as articles for the toilet, shoes, stockings, &c., and soon had everything which the poor girl *needed*, and many little articles of luxury beside.

After getting home, and packing all the things, she nailed a neat card upon the trunk, on which she had written the name, ‘MISS ANGELINA LINDSAY,’ and paying a porter, bade him carry the trunk to the house where she had left her cousin.

‘Be careful not to say where you took the trunk from, just

leave it, ask, and answer no questions, and when you come back, I'll give you another quarter !'

'Thank ye ma'am, it's myself, Dinnis O'Flaherty, as 'll do yer biddin ony day, for sich bright looks an good quarters !' replied the porter, hurrying off with his load. But he had not gone ten steps from the door, when he heard himself called back.

'I forgot to send the key. The young lady would be troubled to open it, without that,' said Lize, at the same time handing the key to the porter.

'Yes, sure would she, ma'am, widout she was an ould young un !' replied the man.

Lize did not exactly like his looks, and as she had nothing better to do, she said, 'It's no matter ! give me the key—I'll go around with you !'

'Och, very well, ma'am—but, about the other quarter—if you go wid me, you won't be here to give it to me as you said you would, whin I come back !'

'It's all the same—I'll give it to you there !' replied Lize, and now the poor porter started off, with her close behind him.

In twenty minutes more the trunk was in Angelina's room, and the key in her possession.

Woman *always* has curiosity, so had Angelina, and the contents of the trunk were soon looked over. The dresses and little articles of fancy were looked at carelessly, but one of her kind cousin's purchases was taken up, looked at first with surprise, then with pleasure, and pressed to the young girl's lips fondly and fervently.

Methinks I hear my readers wonder what present a fallen, wretched and degraded courtesan could have selected, which should so please a pure and good girl. Many a guess would they make, I think, before they would touch the right object, but we'll save them the trouble of wondering. It was a *Bible*. If Lize was not good herself, she knew of the book which good people do love—and she judged rightly that it would be an acceptable present for her young cousin.

After Angelina had examined her trunk, she took her new Bible in her hand and went to her window and seated herself by it. The day was beautiful out ; and though it was winter, still the sun shone mildly down upon the house tops, making even the snow look warm and sweaty.

She could not refrain from raising her window. As she did so and gazed out, looking up and down the street, the fresh air came and gave a little more colour to her cheek.

Suddenly, however, that colour faded—her cheek became white as the snow on the opposite roof, and as she drew her head quickly in, she gasped, and murmured :

'Again—again ! Oh, God help me—my persecutor, again !'

Then she peeped carefully from the window once more, and as she did so, quickly again drew back, and murmured:

‘He stops at this door—oh, God! Have I been betrayed—who could have sent him here?’

She paused a moment as if for thought, and to gather strength, and then she cried:

‘I will fly—I will not stay here—he shall insult me no more!’

‘In one moment more she had put on her bonnet and shawl; her veil was doubled over her face, and leaving her trunk open, everything just as it was when she opened the window, she hurried from the room.

When she passed down the stairs and reached the front door, a gentleman was just entering the parlour, and in his voice she recognized *Livingston*. It was him whom she had seen from her window, and yet he did not come there to seek her, nor did he dream of her vicinity when she passed him and went out.

This was the house of Mrs. Windeman. *Livingston* had called to see Maria Deloraine, who still retained her rooms here, though to excuse her temporary residence at Madame L.’s, she pretended to be on a visit to a sick friend. Yet at certain hours she managed to be ‘at home,’ to meet sundry little engagements.

Had Angelina known all this, she would not again have been a homeless wanderer in the street, but alas, she *was*!

CHAPTER XII.

ON the evening of the same day when Carlton advanced him the money, Meadows began his dreadful servitude by furnishing him with impressions of every important key in his employer’s store. This Carlton had demanded in a note which he wrote him but an hour afterwards, and as Charles had charge of the keys, this was an easy thing for him to do, especially as directions how to procure the impressions were given.

As we have already seen, after this was done, he staggered home, pale, weak and almost fainting from the effects of the dreadful excitement through which he had passed on that day.

He had not been home long when Harry Whitmore returned with a carriage to convey Isabella, as both she and her mother supposed, to his sister’s on a visit.

It was strange that neither brother or mother felt any suspicion or wondered why he should take her away just at night-fall, but they did not, for the conduct of Whitmore be-

fore the females, had been very pure and exemplary, and the brother only thought him a little wild, and even conceived that this was caused by his over-good-heartedness.

And Isabella went with a heart half sad and yet glad. She scarcely knew how to feel. As the hour approached—she certainly felt more and more that natural fear which any pure and delicate maiden *must* feel, but then she *loved* Whitmore, and where woman loves, she is *all* confidence. She did not dream of deceit. Yet, when she parted with her mother, then her eyes were tearful, and she kissed her with more than her usual fervour. She went to her brother too, and kissed his feverish brow with her moist, warm lips, and bade him good night with a trembling voice.

Her mother responded to her parting words, with a—

‘Good night; God bless you, my dear child!’ which thrilled to the bottom of the daughter’s heart.

‘God bless her!’ Indeed did she then need His blessing and protection; but Providence seemed to have abandoned her, pure and innocent as she was.

Yet who shall dare to condemn the all-wise and far-seeing Creator for this: who shall murmur at his will. All things are ordered for the best: and this, though we cannot see its good, must be connected with the great scheme of life and its necessary changes.

Isabella and her intended seducer entered the carriage which he had prepared, and hurried away to Greenwich street.

While they were leaving the carriage, and standing before the door of Madame L., another carriage drove rapidly past. It was close curtained and had but one occupant, yet she was one of our characters, one who had a sad and heavy heart. Her destination too was a house in Greenwich street, one of most ‘*unquestionable character.*’

Poor Mary Sheffield—she too had parted with her mother, parted perchance never to see her again, had received a blessing and a kiss as Isabella had, but, oh, how differently was she situated.

But she might have been only a little advanced in misery. Was not the other on the verge of taking the same road which she had followed? Was Isabella more pure as she stood there while the carriage of Mary drove past, than was Mary Sheffield five months before? No—alas, no! What would five months more bring to Isabella Meadows? Alas, who then could say?

True to her promise, Big Lize called at Mrs. Windeman’s at nightfall to see Angelina. Upon inquiring for her, she was told that she had gone out not more than an hour before dinner, and had not since returned.

Lize hurried up to her room, where she found everything in confusion, just as the poor frightened girl had left it: her Bible laying on the chair by the window—the window still open.

‘My God!’ murmured the woman, ‘what can have become of her?’

‘I can’t tell—can’t imagine!’ said Mrs. Windeman, who had also come up stairs, ‘the girl saw her go out!’

‘She went alone, didn’t she?’ asked Lize.

‘Yes, but she seemed in a great hurry, and all of a tremble like: the girl noticed it particularly, for she’d just let in a gentleman!’

‘A gentleman? Did he speak to her?’

‘No, he didn’t come to see her; he came to visit one of my boarders, Miss Deloraine!’

‘Who was he—do you know him?’

‘Oh, yes, he’s a particular friend of Aramintina, one of my daughters. He’s the rich, handsome Mr. Gus. Livingston!’

‘Gus. Livingston?’ muttered Lize, ‘I’ve heard that name before!’

‘Yes I dare say you have; everybody knows him—he’s so rich, and so handsome. They do say he pays particular attention to Miss Deloraine, but my Aramintina says it’s no such thing, and she had it from his own lips!’

‘Livingston? Gus. Livingston? Oh, yes, by heaven! I remember now. I see it all: the poor gal saw him a comin’ when she looked out of the window and then she cut and run!’ cried Lize, who had not heeded the remarks of the landlady.

She seemed almost maddened with the thought.

‘Where on earth could she be?’ murmured she, again; then while anger flushed her face and brightened her eye, she cried:

‘Curse that Livingston! If harm befalls that poor gal, I’ll have his heart’s blood!’

‘Oh, *my!* how you *do* talk! Why, he had nothing to do with her!’

‘You lie, you old hag! I tell you he had! He drove her out of your rotten old crib here!’

‘Hag? how dare you talk so to me! I thought you wasn’t any better than you should be!’ screamed the angry landlady.

‘Out of my way, afore I walk right over you! I’m a goin’ to look for the gal, and if I don’t find her, you and your Gus. Livingston shall suffer, or my name’s not Big Lize! that’s all; git out of the way;’ shouted the enraged woman, and pushing Mrs. W. aside, she sprang down the stairs and hurried away.

Her first idea was to search for Angelina; but she knew that she might nearly as well look for a needle in a haystack, as to try to seek out the poor girl in this vast city without

some trace of her route, and she then determined to meet her pal as she had promised, in Thomas street, and to get his aid as well as that of all the prowling gang, who, being ever on the walk, might stand some chance of finding her out.

She therefore hurried on up Greenwich street, and had nearly reached the corner where she would turn up to Broadway, when the door of the carriage which had just stopped close before a door which she was passing, opened, and a gentleman stepped out of it muffled in a cloak. She got a glimpse of his face as he stepped on the pavement, for there were lights attached to the carriage, and she at once recognized a man whom she had twice knocked down.

It was Livingston.

'Curse you! I have found you, have I!' she cried, springing upon him and clenching him by the throat, 'Where is the gal?'

'Stop, stop, my good woman, you are making a mistake!' cried Livingston; 'I am a minister!' and as he said this he dropped his cloak, and showed that he was robed in the full costume of a clergyman.

But she had seen his face, and she knew it well.

'Minister be d——d!' she cried; 'I know you, Gus. Livingston! I know you in any rig!'

Livingston was naturally a coward, but his present business made him doubly so, and while his whole frame trembled he cried:

'Let go of me, my good woman! Let go of me—I tell you you are mistaken! Here, take my purse; there's nearly fifty dollars in it! take it and let me go!'

'D——n your money! Where's the gal?' shrieked the woman, clenching him still closer, and beginning to choke him.

'In the house, I s'pose!' gasped the terrified villain.

The woman dashed him to the earth with terrific force, where he lay amid a crowd, which was rapidly collecting, and as she did so, turned to the door, which at that moment was opened by a gentleman, for the noise made had already alarmed the neighbourhood.

'What is the matter here? What the h—l is the row?' asked this gentleman as he stepped out upon the threshold.

'Go to h—l and see!' shouted Lize, madly, for in Whitmore she recognised another of those who had insulted her cousin before Florence's, and as she spoke she dashed his head violently against the door post, and rushed into the house.

Turning into the open parlour, she saw three females, all of them apparently much terrified.

'Where is the gal?' Give her up you bloody strumpets, or I'll tear the house down!'

'Oh, mercy, the woman is mad!' murmured Isabella, for there she stood, dressed all in white, ready for the bridal.

'What do you want?' asked Maria Deloraine and Miss Wood, who were more calm, because, perchance, they were more used to such scenes.

'My cousin! my poor cousin! She's here, I know she is, for I've seen the men that tried to take her off before. Blast 'em, I've given 'em sore heads for one while!' cried Lize.

'Woman, you're crazy. Go away, or we'll call the police!' said Maria, advancing toward her.

'Call your police, if you dare! They're just the people I want. I know what kind of a house this is. Give up my cousin, or I'll call the police!'

'Who is your cousin? she cannot be here!' said Isabella, timidly, for she had begun to recover a little from her fright.

Lize looked at her before she spoke, and that glance determined her answer.

'Look'ee, Miss, you looks as if you was innocent, like, and hadn't been long in such a house as this; do tell me where they've hid my poor cousin?'

Maria saw by the look of Isabella that she begun to be alarmed, and placed herself at once between her and the woman.

'Don't listen to her, dear sister!' she cried. 'The woman is certainly crazy!'

'No, not crazy yet!' replied Lize more calmly, 'but I soon shall be if I don't find poor Angelina. Oh, for God's sake give her up to me!'

Isabella was touched by the imploring tone of the woman, and despite her alarm saw that something must be wrong, and determined to become satisfied.

'Who is Angelina?' she asked, coming forward and looking Lize in the face.

'She is my cousin, Miss—a young innocent girl—one that looks as pure as you do, who I'm sure ought never to have come to a house like this!'

'Like this? What do you know of this house?'

'What? don't you know—are you not yet a victim?'

'A victim? To what? Tell me quickly!'

Maria saw that this would not do: exposure was but too certain if it continued, and she cried:

'Isabella, you must not listen to this woman, she is crazy; come, do come into the back room!'

Miss Wood too joined in pressing her to leave the room, but so far forgot herself as to use some very coarse epithets toward Lize.

How it would have ended now we know not, but the entrance of two more persons on the scene, made an instant change.

Isabella saw her affianced lover stagger into the room, his face covered with blood, supported by a man garbed as a minister, whose nose was also bleeding.

'What is the matter, Henry? Oh, mercy! What *is* the matter?' she shrieked.

'Nothin', Miss, only I mashed his head a little agin the wall, for him and that other scoundrel have stolen my cousin!'

'D—n that woman, she is always in our way!' cried Livingston, forgetting his clerical robe.

Isabella heard this, and turning to Lize said:

'Do you know that man—is he not a minister?'

'One of the devil's ministers, Miss. He is Gus. Livingston, one of the wildest rakes in town!'

'Water—water,' murmured Whitmore, 'I shall faint!' As he said this he staggered to a sofa and fell back on it. But Isabella did not move to help him.

She stood like one spell-bound. With her hands clasped over her brow, as if to keep her head from bursting with the dreadful thought which entered it, she stood and looked first at one and then another of the party.

Maria, self convicted, had sunk down upon a chair and burst into tears. Emma Wood alone had presence of mind to go for water for Whitmore, who had indeed fainted.

Livingston stood by the door as if he intended to run away, looking both frightened and foolish.

This lasted only a second. It was broken by Lize, who made a bound upon Livingston, and before he could move, seized him by the neck.

'Where is my cousin?' she shrieked. 'Give her up, or, by the God that made you, I'll choke you to death! what are you a doin' here with a priest's gown upon you?'

'Let go of me, good woman—don't go to raise such a cursed row, here! I don't know your cousin!'

'Take that for lyin', you blasted thief!' shouted Lize, giving him a cuff upon the ear, which would have knocked him down, if she had not upheld him with the other hand.

'D—n you, let me go!' cried Gus., maddened by the pain, and striking her heavily.

'That's your game, is it, my covey!' cried the strong woman. 'Two can play at it then!'

As she said this, with her clenched hand, she struck him two tremendous blows, which left him completely senseless. The next moment, when she let go of him with her left hand, he fell limberly to the floor, and made no motion to get up.

Lay there, you worthless dog!' cried Lize, spurning him with her foot.

She now advanced to Isabella, and with a changed tone, and manner, begged her to tell her, where they had hidden poor Angelina.

'I know nothing, woman, indeed I do not,' she replied. Oh, God, what can all this mean?'

She then turned to Maria, who having lost all self-command, was weeping in the corner, and said,

'Maria, there is something very wrong here! oh, as you are a woman, tell me—tell me if you love me!' and the beautiful girl knelt down before the courtesan.

'Go away from here—quick. Leave the house before he comes too!' sobbed Maria—'do—do—it is your only safety!'

'I will—I will—oh, thank God, I've a home to go to!' shrieked Isabella, who, though not yet comprehending all the plot, knew that she was in some imminent danger.

But, as she turned to the door, she saw that Whitmore had recovered, through the aid of Emma, and was once more on his feet.

He sprang in an instant to the door—the key was on the inside. He locked it, and put the key in his pocket.

'Where were you going, dear Isabella?' he asked.

'Home, sir! home, to stay there, until this strange mystery is explained.'

'Dearest—it—it can be explained on the spot; that woman is crazy!'

Lize did not speak, she stood over Livingston, with her arms folded, as if she was waiting for him to get up again.

Isabella looked a moment at Whitmore, and then replied:

'I do not care whether she is crazy or not! I will go home!'

'Isabella,' replied he, in a calm, firm tone, 'you shall not, until I have had a chance for explanation!'

'Well, sir, go on; explain quickly—is he a minister?' and she pointed to the prostrate Livingston.'

'Yes, certainly, and ere this moment would have married us, had it not been for that crazy woman.'

'*Marriage* in a house like this! Talk of religion in hell, and vice in heaven! *Marriage* here! Ha! ha! that is a joke!' cried Lize; and then, before another word could be uttered by Whitmore, she turned to Isabella and said:

'Young woman, I begin to see into this 'ere business. That swell has brought you here on a promise to marry you, and he's put this other cove up to *sham* minister. He'd have married you for a month, and then have kicked you out o' doors. These ere gals are no better than I, and I've been on the town for years!'

'Shameless wretch!' cried Whitmore, 'stop your lying! Isabella, you can see she is crazy!'

'Crazy or not, Henry, I wish to go home. Once more I ask you to open the door!'

'But you cannot go home without a carriage!'

'There is one at the door; I saw it when I looked from the window, a moment ago!' replied Isabella.

'I do not care; Isabella, you shall not go till I explain, and satisfy you that nothing is wrong!'

'Do let her go, Harry, do let her go, or I'll tell her all!' said Maria, still sobbing, and advancing to Whitmore.

He saw how inopportune was this remark, and, in a moment, maddened by anger, struck her heavily on the face, crying—

'Take that for your interference!'

She tottered back and fell to the floor, while the red blood gushed from her mouth.

'Oh, coward! how *could* you strike your sister!' cried Isabella, indignantly.

'I'm not his sister! Oh, save yourself while you can,' murmured Maria, and then fainted.

Emma Wood, who had stood idly by, not knowing what to do, sprung to her aid now, exclaiming—

'You're no man, Harry Whitmore, to strike a woman! I'll have nothing more to do with your infernal villany!'

'Give me the key of that door! I will not stay longer! I now begin to see it all!' cried Isabella.

'If you do, Miss, then you shall stay and see it through!' replied Whitmore, now boldly throwing off even the guise of affection. 'You shall not leave this house to-night. You came here with your own consent—you shall only leave it with mine!'

Oh, mercy! God of heaven protect me! murmured the helpless girl. 'Henry Whitmore, if you have a man's heart in you, let me go! I will forgive all you have intended, only do, pray, let me go!'

'I will, when I get ready, but not to-night. Why, girl, you're foolish: this is my wedding-night!'

'No no! That night will never come! I will die before you shall ever be husband to me!'

'Well, well, just as you like. If you won't *marry* me, I assure you I shall not press the matter; but you are mine now!'

'Oh, God! never! never! Is there no way of getting out of this terrible place?' screamed the unhappy girl.

'Yes, gal, there is, and I'll help you!' replied Lize, stepping to the window and flinging up the sash.

As she did this, her shrill voice rung along the street, and she screamed—

'Watch! Watch! Murder! Help! Help!'

Whitmore knew the effect which this cry would have, and raising Isabella in his arms before she could move, he sprung through the back parlour door and disappeared.

Twice her scream was heard—wild, loud, and fearful, and then all was still—still as the grave.

When Lize heard the hurrying footsteps of the watchmen, she turned again to the room, and saw that Whitmore and Isabella had disappeared, but Livingston had regained his feet.

Emma Wood had been busy in trying to recover poor Maria—so far without success.

At this moment Whitmore returned, and putting in the key, at once opened the door.

'Where is the girl?' asked Livingston, in a whisper.

'Safe in the cellar, tied and gagged!' replied Whitmore, in the same tone. 'Now support me, and we'll soon have this noisy lady hushed up. She shall see that the watch is called to some purpose, or I'm mistaken. Here, Emma, take Maria into the back parlour; Gus. help her, quick? Then shut and lock the door.'

This was done, and when Whitmore opened the front door to the watchmen who came, there was no one but Big Lize and Livingston in the front parlour. The carriage which Livingston came in, but had forgotten to pay, drove off at the first alarm.

'What's the devilment?' asked one of the watchmen, his brogue betraying that he was Irish. like nearly one half, or perhaps more, of his brethren 'in office.'

'There's one of the women in the house crazy drunk, and she's been fighting and raising a row. I wish you'd take care of her!'

'Faith that we will!' replied the other, and the two followed Whitmore into the parlour.

'Which is the cratur?' asked the first watchman, as he entered, for both Livingston and Lize were particularly quiet at that moment.

'There—the woman; seize her—she has raised the row!'

Lize, who had been struck dumb by the sudden disappearance and quiet of Isabella, had stood wondering what had become of her; but now she spoke.

'Are you watchmen?' she asked of the guardians of the night.

'Faith, that we are, so come along wid us peaceably, like a lady, now!' said No. 1, shaking his large club most uninvitingly.

'Then do your duty! Arrest those men; for I believe there's been a murder done here within less than five minutes past!'

'A murder! Just hear her! Why she just broke in, and tried to murder us! Look how we're bleeding yet!'

'So they are! and she looks big enough to ate 'em up!' replied watchee No. 2.

'Come along wid us; we knows you,' said No. 1.

'But it is not me that you want; it was I that called you; these young men have a young woman in the house, that they're trying to ruin, and—'

'Just hear her! I told you she was crazy, or drunk,' cried Whitmore; and Livingston added:

'Yes, she's undoubtedly crazy. Do take her off, my good fellows. There's an X for your trouble.'

'Sure, an' it's no trouble at all, at all, your honour,' said No. 2, pocketing the ten-dollar note, at the same time saying, 'I'll halve it wid ye, Phalim, when we git it changed.'

'Well, come along wid ye,' cried the other to Lize, 'if ye called us, you wanted us, sure, and here we are arter you !'

'You will not arrest those villains, then ?' asked Lize.

'Sure an' I don't see ony, 'ceptin' it be yourself !' replied No. 2, and as they both began to sidle up towards her, No. 1 said :

'Now, behave yourself like a dacent woman, as may be ye are, an' can prove to his honour in the mornin', do now, an' come along wid us, like a lady !'

'Keep back ! keep back ! I will not be arrested !' cried she, and, quick as lightning, she snatched the large club from the speaker's hand.

The other watchman struck at her, but she met his blow, and before he could again raise his hand, she struck him down. The other sprang to his aid, and shared the same fate. The coast was nearly clear now, and Lize sprung through the open door, dashed through the crowd, which had been gathered in the street, by the noise, and in a moment more was safe, having turned up a dark and narrow alley, which led out of the main thoroughfare.

'Be jabers, but she did hit hard !' muttered watchman, No. 1, about three minutes after she had left, picking himself up at the same time.

'Sure, an' I think it was a man in gal's petticoats, I do !' muttered the other, rubbing his head.

'Where is the divil ?' asked No. 1.

'She's clear ; she ran out of the door !' replied Whitmore.

'Och, yer honour, why didn't yez knock her down ?'

'She had your cudgel in her hand, and seemed inclined to do all the knocking herself, but never mind ; let her go now !' replied Whitmore, who was glad enough to get rid of her, and wished now to have the watchmen leave also.

'Yis,' replied No. 1, 'we may as well agree to let her go now, for she has taken the *lave* whither or no. But she said something about murder !'

'Oh, she was crazy, I told you,' replied Whitmore, 'here is another X for you, to save your friend the trouble of changing his !'

'Ah, thank yer honer ; we'll drink your health wid it !'

'Very well ; good night !'

'Good night, yer honers, pleasant dreams wid ye !'

The watchmen went away. Whitmore and Livingston were once more alone.

'Well, by thunder, this *was a go* !' muttered Livingston,

who had divested himself of his clerical gown, when he assisted Emma to take Maria to the back parlour.

‘But we’re out of it! Now you can take yourself home as soon as you like!’

‘What, Harry! shan’t I stay to marry you?’

‘No, blast it, no! I’ll not even do her the honour of a *sham* marriage now. I shall not want you any more: but I’ll be at your rooms in the morning.’

‘Early?’

‘Can’t say as to that; but wait there till I come!’

‘Very well; good night!’

When Livingston had gone away, Whitmore went into the back parlour.

Maria had recovered from her fainting-fit, and Emma was washing away the blood stains.

‘I am very sorry, Maria, that I struck you,’ said he, in a contrite tone; ‘but you made me so angry, that I didn’t know what I was about!’

‘Where is Isabella?’ asked Maria, not heeding his apology.

‘Gone home; she’s safe; but don’t be angry with me!’ replied Whitmore; ‘I did not know what I was about, when I struck you!’

‘No; you did not, but I can tell you. You were making for yourself the bitterest foe that ever followed a man to curse him! You have *lied* to me. Isabella Meadows is in the house; Emma saw you carry her back, when I lay senseless where you had laid me, with a mean, unmanly blow!’

‘Maria, I took her to the back door, and let her go, so that she should not tell the watchmen. The moment I let her go, she ran through to the street, and as the watchmen came in, I saw her go up towards her home.’

While Whitmore spoke, Maria gazed him steadily in the eye, but he was enough of an accomplished villain to bear all this; and returned her gaze without a flush or tremour.

‘You may speak truth, and you may not, Harry Whitmore; but, if you do wrong that poor girl, may her curse, my curse, and the curse of God Almighty rest upon you!’

Whitmore did blanch a little, when he heard these words in a stern tone, but he recovered himself in a moment, and said:

‘I’ve given her up, Maria, you need not fear for her; but do make up with me!’

‘Never, never, sir! You struck me—a woman, even as if I had been a beast!’

‘But, Maria, you blinded me with anger!’

‘I care not—there is no excuse for a man raising his hand to a woman. Would to God the arm that is raised to strike any woman, if it be the hand of a man, could be blasted ere it fell!’

‘Well, well, Maria, if you will quarrel with me, you must. But I don’t deserve it!’

‘Don’t deserve it! Does a murderer deserve hanging?’

Whitmore did not reply immediately, but commenced counting some money from his pocket-book. After he did so, he passed a small roll of notes towards Maria, saying:

‘There are the thousand dollars, Miss Deloraine. If your part of the bargain is not fulfilled, *mine* shall be!’

Maria was evidently touched at this apparent generosity, but she neither spoke nor reached out her hand to receive the money.

Whitmore then laid it in her lap, and taking out two fifty-dollar notes from his pocket-book, handed it to Miss Wood.

‘There, Emma, take that—I’m sorry I’ve given you so much trouble. Now ladies, I’ll bid you good evening!’

He turned away as if he really meant to leave the house—and this at once caused Maria to think that Isabella had indeed gone home.

‘Stop a moment, Mr. Whitmore,’ said she, ‘where were you going?’

‘To my lodgings, Miss Deloraine;—have you any command?’

‘No, sir—but—but I do not think it right for me to take your money. Have the kindness to take it back!’

‘No; you said some time ago that you needed just one thousand dollars, that with it you could accomplish some purpose which you had long cherished. Keep it, and may you be happy!’

His tone was now kind, though cold, and as it was assumed on purpose to deceive her, and to work upon her better feelings, it succeeded.

Emma kissed her, and said,

‘Do make it up with Harry, Maria! I am sure he is sorry he struck you!’

‘Indeed, I am,’ added Whitmore.

Maria, whose heart was of a strange compound, a mixture of good and bad, with both natures ever struggling to gain the ascendancy, did not need this interference of Emma’s to decide her. Her impulsive mind, quick to anger, and as quickly calm again, had already changed, and she said:

‘I’ll forgive you, Harry—but even now I do not like to take this money! You have failed in your undertaking, perhaps, through me.’

‘Never mind—keep the money. I’ve lost the girl, but “there are as good fish in the sea as ever were caught!”’ replied Harry, at the same time drawing Emma Wood to him, and impressing a kiss upon her full red lips.

The girl seemed flattered by this attention, and returned

the kiss, perhaps as a kind of receipt for the hundred dollars which he had given her.

Maria thought that, as affairs seemed to be turning, her company was not needed, and rising, said :

‘I’ll go home, Harry, now; if you have no objections!’

‘None in the world, Maria; if you have entirely forgiven me.’

‘Oh, yes; and I will try to forget all but your kindness!’ replied the girl. ‘Give me a kiss, Harry, and consider all made up.’

‘Certainly, Maria—I wish I could forgive myself as easily for that unlucky blow.’

‘Don’t think of it any more, Harry—come and see me to-morrow, if you can, for I shall leave town in a day or two.’

‘I will, Maria. Good-night!’ The girl left the room to get her cloak and bonnet, and in a few moments more left the house.

‘So much for her,’ cried Whitmore, after he heard the outer door slammed to, and knew thereby that she had left. ‘So much for her; she’s out of the way.’

‘Well, what do you intend to do with yourself, Harry?’ asked Miss Wood, with a smile; ‘You don’t intend to go home to night, eh?’

‘No, indeed!’ replied the libertine.

‘Then I suppose that——’

‘You needn’t suppose anything at all, Emma,’ replied Whitmore, interrupting her; ‘you can retire as soon as you choose; I do not need your company any more to-night.’

‘Why, Harry, how strange you talk. I thought——’

‘Confound it! I don’t want you to think. I want your room—not your company.’

‘But, Harry, there is no one in the house but us. You know when Madame I. gave it up for this affair to you, I was to remain in charge.’

‘Yes, you were, and to let me do just as I pleased in the house.’

‘That is true: now, what do you please to do? Will you have some wine?’

‘No; I wish no wine. I want you to go to bed, and if you hear any noise, to forget it, and pay no attention to it.’

‘Then the girl is in the house yet.’

‘To be sure she is! Do you think I’d let her slip after I’d got her fairly in my hands?’

‘It would not have been much like you: but what do you intend now?’

‘That is my business; you go to bed, and to sleep. Here is another fifty, put it under your pillow to dream upon.’

‘Thank you, Harry; but you are so wild, I must pity the poor creature.’

'Pity her? Ha, ha! that is a good joke, Emma, from you. How long is it since I heard you wish that you had it in your power to bring all woman-kind down to a level with your class?'

'I believe I did say something like that, but then I didn't have a case like this, right before me, to think of.'

'Well, well, girl; you may save your pity. She will never be any worse off than you are. Now, just become invisible as soon as possible, she must be half-dead with cold and fright.'

'Where is she?'

'In the cellar. I laid her down on a pile of straw, or something.'

'She keeps very still; may be she is dead.'

'No danger of that; she won't die so easy; but, as for her keeping quiet, you would too, if you had a handkerchief stuffed in your mouth, and your hands and feet tied.'

'Oh, how could you serve her so! Harry 'you are cruel; by Heaven, if you had treated me so, I'd kill you, if I had to be hung for it.'

'I don't think you would ever put a man to such a necessity!' replied Harry, with a smile; 'but, leave me, I'm going down after her.'

Emma, who did not seem much pleased with his course, arose, and slowly left the room, while he hurried away to the cellar.

In a moment more he hurried back to the parlour, for a light, muttering as he came:

'She isn't where I laid her down! curse it, how could she move when I bound her so tight.'

He again descended, and after a moment he rushed up the stairs, cursing and swearing at every step.

'Emma! Emma!' he shouted.

'Well, what is it?' asked the cyprian, bending over the balustrades of the stair-way, for she now was in the second story.

'The girl has escaped! By thunder, this is too bad! But she must be in the house.'

'I hope not,' murmured the girl; 'poor thing, how I pity her.'

This was said as Whitmore commenced a search in the lower rooms. At the moment when she expressed her pity, Emma heard a noise behind her, and, even before she could turn, heard a low moan, and the words—

'Oh, save me! save me! For the love of heaven, save me!'

She looked around, and there stood poor Isabella—her white dress stained with the earth of the cellar—her face pale as marble—her eyes wild with terror—her whole frame quivering with the agony of fear.

‘Oh, save me, save me!’ murmured the poor girl, kneeling—her hands clasped together, and great tears standing in her large eyes.

‘I will, if I can! Oh, where can I put you! He will search the house. There—go in my room! Hide under the bed! Don’t move, or hardly breathe! I’ll do all I can for you—poor, poor girl.’

As Isabella hurried into the room of Emma, the steps of Whitmore were heard. He was already ascending the stairs, having sought in vain for his unfortunate victim below. He appeared to be in a fearful rage,—curses, bitter and loud, were on his lips, coupled with such threats as made even Emma Wood tremble.

PART FOURTH.

CHAPTER I.

WHEN Angelina, our poor sewing-girl, fled from the house of Mrs. Windeman, frightened at the appearance of Gus Livingston, she knew not where to go. Her first thought was to return to the panel-crib of her new found cousin, but two thoughts at once arose to prevent her from going there. The first, was her knowledge of the character of that house; the second, a fear that Lize had something to do with the appearance of Livingston; that she, led away by some new and tempting inducement, had betrayed her.

This was a cruelly unjust thought, but Angelina did not pause to consider how directly contrary it would have been to all the former conduct of the poor panel-girl, whose character, with all its faults and vices, certainly did not possess the stain of faithlessness. What she was, she knew and felt, but too well; what she had been, she still remembered; and she was too open hearted to pretend to be what she was not. In fact, she was of that character which we rarely, yet sometimes, *do* meet—one who was *honest* in her open acknowledgment of all her faults. Not that she would openly acknowledge her guilt to all, for she could either be silent or give vent to ‘virtuous indignation’ before a magistrate, or she could be whatever she wished to the verdant stranger whom she wanted to inveigle into her crib. A talented woman was she in her way.

But to return to Angelina. When she left her boarding-house, she hurried on, trembling at the sound of every foot-step behind her, directing her course towards the northern part of the city. She almost ran, while she was in the crowded and busy thoroughfares of the city—but she became very weary in a little while, for she was weak in body and sick at heart. As night came on, she had reached a quiet street in the upper portion of the town, one of those few streets not used by the omnibus lines, and traversed by few vehicles except an occasional private carriage belonging to one of the wealthy dwellers in that neighbourhood.

Her steps were now very slow—she felt faint at heart and a dizziness seemed to come over her brain, and to throw a mist before her eyes. The twilight began to deepen—still she wandered on, not knowing where to go or what to do.

At last she felt that she could go no further. She saw a young lady advancing, wrapped in a warm cloak, her hands folded in a large muff, and she determined for the first time in her life to *beg*. The young lady was attended by a well-dressed young man, and both of them appeared to be of the wealthy class, by the rich and fashionable appearance of their garments.

Angelina timidly looked the young lady in the face as she came near, and with a voice trembling from emotion as well as fear and cold, said :

‘Please, Miss, aid a poor helpless girl to get a place to lodge in to-night. I will work, indeed I will.’

The young lady paused a moment, for Angelina stood right before her, then turning up a little pug nose, which was slightly blued by the cold, replied :

‘I haint got no change, have you any, brother Alfred Eustace?’

‘Yes, but not for the likes of her,’ responded the young man with a careless glance at the trembling girl ; ‘there are lots of places where she can get lodgings free and make money by it, too, down town. Come along sis, she’s not fit for you to speak to.’

And young Alfred Eustace Fitzroy Fitz Lawrence hurried his sister away, after making his last coarse and unfeeling insinuation, leaving the wretched Angelina standing alone upon the icy pavement.

It was now dark. ‘Oh God of mercy, let me die and go where my mother is,’ murmured the poor girl.

She staggered to a door step close to her, and seating herself upon it, burst into tears. But she tried to hush her sobs as she heard footsteps approaching, and almost held her breath, for her first attempt at begging had so chilled her, that she did not feel like speaking to another passer-by. But the person who now approached didn’t intend to pass, he

turned to the very steps where she sat, and was passing up them, when her half-stifled sobs, which she could not suppress, fell on his ear.

He stopped, and descending to the corner where she was seated, close up against the iron rail, asked in a voice which sounded rather gruff, but still not unkind :

‘Hallo ! what’s this—what’s this ? Who are you on my door step at this time o’night ?’

‘Forgive me, Sir, I’ll go, but I was so tired !’ murmured the poor girl.

‘Where to—where do you live ?’ asked the gentleman, now looking more closely at her.

Her only reply was a fresh burst of tears. She could hold in no longer. That question told her how utterly homeless and desolate she was.

‘Poor girl—poor girl !’ Now don’t cry, but tell me what’s the matter !’

She would have spoken if she could, but her sobs choked her utterance.

‘Poor creetur !’ murmured the gentleman in a pitying tone, and he passed his hand over his own eyes, as if to wipe away a sympathetic moisture there.

The kindness of his tone seemed to assure poor Angelina that she need not fear an insult from him ; and when he again asked here where she lived, she replied, that she had no home now.

‘No home, child ? Now be a good girl and don’t tell me stories. I can’t abide ’em. Where is your father and mother ?’

‘Dead—both dead !’ sobbed the girl.

‘No brothers nor sisters ?’

‘No—none ! I am all alone !’ responded the poor girl.

‘Why how have you lived ? Where did you live until now ?’

‘I lived with my poor mother till she was—till she died, and then I went with a woman who said she was my cousin, but I saw a man who frightened me and I ran away !’

‘A man that frightened you ? Did he mean you harm ?’ inquired the gentleman still more kindly.

‘Yes, Sir, he had insulted me before, and I was so afraid of him !’

‘And you have no home now ?’

‘No, Sir !’

‘Poor creetur ! I must do something for you, I must ! Let me see ; If I give you money, do you know where to find lodgings ?’

‘No, Sir, indeed I do not. I’m afraid to go down town—there are so many men in the street who will insult a poor girl like me !’

‘Right—you *are* right, my girl. I believe you are good. I can’t see you well here, but you weep and tell a very straight story. You don’t walk the streets at night?’

‘Oh, no, Sir! God save me from that!’

‘Amen, my good girl! I believe I can trust you. I’ll give you a home for to-night at any rate. You shall have some warm supper, and tell me all your story, and then you shall sleep with Jenny my house-maid!’

‘God will bless you, Sir!’ murmured the poor girl, gratefully. She obeyed him, and followed him to the basement door of the building before which they had stood. Herang the bell, and in a moment the door was opened by a neat, tidy-looking girl, who held a light in her hand.

The maid looked surprised as she saw that her master was followed by a young girl, and as the latter rather held back, the gentleman very kindly said,

‘Come in, my dear, come in out of the cold!’

Then turning to the maid who had opened the door, he said:

‘Jenny, here’s a poor girl who has no home. Give her some supper and treat her kindly!’

‘Yes, Sir,’ said the maid, dropping a low curtsy, but looking very suspiciously at the poor creature ‘who had no home.’

They now entered the little sitting room in the basement, where a very cheerful fire was blazing.

A young man was seated before this, with a book in his hand, apparently very intently engaged in its persual, but he arose as the party entered.

‘Ah! Francis,’ said the old gentleman, ‘reading away, eh? good boy—*very* good boy!’

The maid now assisted the old gentleman off with his hat and overcoat, while the young man took them from her, and placed a chair for his master.

‘Never mind the chair for me, Francis, I shall go up to my parlour,’ said he, ‘but here’s a poor girl whom you and Jenny must be very kind to! Hurry and get her some supper!’

‘Yes, Sir,’ said Jenny,—‘but, sir, have you had supper yet?’

‘No—really no! Well, I had forgot all about that. Never mind; give her some as soon as you can. Poor creetur, how thin she looks! She must have had a deal of trouble!’

Then, when he had made her take her bonnet and shawl off, he continued, speaking, as if to himself:

‘Poor creetur! how pale—she would be pretty if it wasn’t for that!’

Then he turned to Francis and said,

‘Come up stairs with me, Francis, I want you a little while!’

‘Yes, sir,’ said Frank, laying down his book.

Before the old gentleman had reached the door-way, he was stopped by the little housemaid, who whispered :

‘Is *she* to stay here all night ?’

‘Yes, Jenny, of course she is ! She has nowhere else to go !’

‘Then where is she to sleep ?’ asked Jenny quickly.

‘Why, with you of course. You have a large double bed !’

The little servant maid seemed struck dumb with surprise at this announcement.

‘Why, sir,’ she gasped, ‘you’ve picked her up in the *street*. How can I tell what she is ? I don’t know what I’ve done, Mr. Precise, to be treated so ! I’m sure she’s some bad girl, and if she sleeps in my bed, I won’t, that’s all !’

Jenny’s voice had risen from the low whisper to a pretty loud key before she closed this last speech, and poor Angelina could not help hearing it.

‘I will sleep anywhere—here on the carpet, or on the settee !’ said she timidly, ‘I don’t wish to offend that young lady.’

‘Young *lady* indeed !’ cried Mr. Precise angrily—‘why she’s not half as good as you are, poor girl, for she has no feelin’ for a sufferin’ fellow creetur. You shall have her bed, and if she don’t choose to share it with you, she may find a place somewhere else !’

‘Then I will, so I will !’ replied the maid indignantly, looking rather wickedly at Frank ; ‘and what’s more, Mr. Precise, I’ll not stay in a house where I am treated so, so I won’t. I’ll not be turned out of my bed for every strumpet you choose to bring home with you !’

Poor Angelina heard this cruel term, and again bursting into tears, said to Mr. Precise—

‘I’m not what she calls me, sir, indeed I’m not. No, sir, if I would be bad like many other girls, I would find plenty of homes in this city—I would not have been a homeless wanderer at this hour !’

‘That’s true, my good girl ! I believe you ! your very tears tell your tale !’ replied Mr. Precise, kindly ; then turning to Jenny, he added :

‘You may choose your lot now, Jenny ; either act like a Christian, or leave my house !’

Finding that her angry and indignant mood could have no effect, Jenny now altered her tone, and said :

‘If you say she is good, sir, I suppose she must be—but I don’t like this takin’ up with everybody as comes along, so I don’t !’

‘I don’t care what you like, Jenny : I like to do my duty as a man and a Christian ; and now hurry and get supper for us all ! The poor girl must be mainly hungry ; any one can see it by her looks ! Don’t cry any more, my dear, I’ll be a friend

—yes a *father* to you ! After you've had your supper, you shall tell me all your story, and I'll see what I can do for you ! Poor creetur, I'm sure she's had a hard time on't. Come along Francis—we must attend to business to-night. a've been talking about my new plan for a "Home for the Poor" and I mean to draw up a plan for a company, for I'm too poor to do it all by myself !

'If you please, sir,' said Frank, recollecting that he had an engagement at Jack Circle's, 'if you please, sir, my poor mother is very low ; I'd like to go and see her for a couple of hours. I'll be up bright and early to attend to your business in the morning.'

Mr. Precise paused a moment before he made a reply, for his heart and head were both full of this new plan for doing good ; but at the end of that thoughtful moment, he replied :

'You're a good boy, Francis, to love your mother. Go and see her. Here, take this,' (handing him a ten dollar piece) 'tell her to buy medicine with it, or anything to make her comfortable. She has a good son ; tell her that I, Peter Precise, say so.'

'Yes, sir,' replied Frank, looking at the money as if he really felt ashamed to take it. Then he asked :

'May I go before tea ?'

'Yes, my boy, if you want to. Jenny be careful and lock the street door behind him ; and I say, Frank !'

'Sir ?'

'Be home early, my boy !'

'Oh, yes, sir, you may depend upon me !' cried the young rascal ; and as if perfectly satisfied that he could depend upon Master Francis, the good old gentleman ascended to his parlour, bearing a new pleasure in his bosom—the thought that he had given a home to a desolate one, that he had closed the day with a truly Christian and charitable act.

How many of our readers who are wealthy, or, at least, *have to spare*, beyond the means necessary for their comfortable sustenance, can say this for one hundredth part of their ending days ?

When Mr. Precise had left the basement, Frank busied himself in putting on his outer garments to prepare for his walk, at the same time glancing often at Angelina, who had seated herself sadly before the fire, as if he wished to make out what kind of a character she could be. He had seen so few poor girls in the city like her, who wore the appearance of virtue, that he could not comprehend her.

Jenny, meantime, without speaking to, or hardly glancing at the poor friendless girl, busied herself in preparing for supper, until Frank told her he was ready for going out.

She then took the light to see him to the door and close it.

'This *is* somethin' new in our master !' said she, as soon as

Frank and herself got into the entry or hall which led to the outer door, she having closed the inner one behind her.

'New, but not strange ! just like him ! he is a warm-hearted old covey !' replied Frank.

'Well, I don't like it, so I don't : and as to sleepin' with her, I *won't*, that's flat !' said Jenny.

'Well, what'll you do ? Sit up and cry all night

'No, I won't do that !'

'Well, what will you do ?'

'I'll,—I'll—, Francis, I'll—you know what I mean !'

'No, 'twont do now, Jenny. She'll blab to the old man. You must be careful now ; remember what Shakspeare says—'

'I don't care what Shakspeare says, Frank ; I don't want to sleep with that 'ere creetur as he's picked up in the streets. May be—she—she keeps boarders in her upper story.'

'What ? Ah, yes, I understand. You mean she may be flush with *creeping* ideas ?'

'Yes ; and I don't like to sleep with her.'

'Well, Jenny, my love, as Byron says, "there *are* antipathies," but I think you are safe ; the girl looks nice and clean ; you'd better run the risk.'

'Well, if *you* say so ; but Francis, dear, will you be home early ?'

'Yes, my dear, if you'll sit up for me.'

'To be sure I will ; but will you come *sober* ?'

'Of course, my dear ; I was slightly elevated the last evening I was out, but I met some old friends, and the imbibatorial spirit overcame me a little !'

'Yes, and it was *so* lucky master didn't find it out.'

'So it was, my dear : good night,' and imprinting a hearty kiss upon the buxom maid's pouting lips, Frank made his exit.

CHAPTER II.

IT was an hour later. Mr. Precise had finished his supper, Jenny had cleared away the table, and now the old gentleman sat before the comfortable fire in the back parlour, listening to the tale of Angelina.

He heard her in simple but touching language relate how she and her poor mother had striven and suffered since her father's death ; how they had worked for their bare and scanty living ; and he shuddered as her tale reminded him of poverty which he had already witnessed in once instance at least. And when she came to that part which told of the villany and persecutions of Livingston, the old gentleman

almost swore, so angry was he at the thought that she, so young and helpless, should be pursued and insulted, simply because she was poor and beautiful.

But he calmed himself to listen to her continuation. When she told him about her mother and herself seeking a home in the 'Brewery,' he stopped her and asked her all about the place. Her replies satisfied him fully of her truth, and when she told him of the horrible murder of her mother, while her utterance was checked by her sobs, tears poured down his cheeks.

He did not check her, however, until she had told all, and then he paused and sighed several times before he ventured to speak.

'Poor creetur!' said he at last. 'You've had more trouble in your short life than I have *ever* seen, and I'm old enough to be your grandfather!'

Then he sat still, and looked at the fire very intently for nearly half an hour, without speaking. Then suddenly bringing his hand down upon his thigh with a heavy slap, which so frightened poor Angelina that she started from her chair, he said in a determined tone:

'Yes! I'll *do* it!'

Then while Angelina was wondering what he meant, he turned to her and said:

'My dear, wouldn't you like to live with me all your life, and be a daughter to me?'

'I'm willing to work for you, sir, if you'll give me employment,' replied Angelina. 'I can sew very well, and I think I could do housework, only I've been very weak lately!'

'But I don't want you to work much. Only to sew a button on for me now and then. I've neither chick nor child in the whole world to love—no one to leave a dollar to—no one to leave my name with. If you'll live with me, and be a good girl, I'll be a father to you!'

The young girl did not reply. Tears stood in her large eyes; her lips trembled with emotion, but she could not speak.

Mr. Precise did not wait for her answer, however. He again brought his hand emphatically down upon his knee, and said:

'Yes, you shall be my own daughter. I'll educate you like a lady. You shall bear my name, and when I die, you shall have all I own!'

The door opened at this moment, and Jenny appeared, her face being very red, too, as she entered.

'Did you call me, sir?' she asked, looking first at Angelina, and then at Mr. Precise.

'No, Jenny, I did not, nor do I want to be disturbed!' replied Mr. Precise, in a sharp tone.

'I only thought——I thought I heard you call!' said Jenny, turning very red, and darting a spiteful glance at the sewing-girl.

'Then you made a mistake. You may go to your work again!' said Mr. Precise, sternly.

The waiting-maid did not reply, but turned away with a scornful shake, which much agitated the voluminous skirts of her garments, and slamming the door behind her, left the apartment.

The reader will better understand the reason of this conduct, when informed that Jenny had spent the twenty minutes prior to her appearance, in listening at the key-hole of the back-parlour door.

After she left, Mr. Precise again spoke to Angelina:

'Would you not like this arrangement, my dear?'

The young girl sighed, and a few scattering tears stole out from her large blue eyes and ran hurriedly along her cheeks, which were not so pale as they had been. A red flush was gathering upon them, and also on her forehead. Yet her lips were growing more pale.

She made no answer to Mr. Precise, but he, noticing her heightened colour, thought it was the warm flush of pleasure thrilling through her veins, at the thought that a better day was dawning upon her young life.

'How beautiful you look, my dear!' said he, 'why I do declare your cheeks are as rosy as a Spitzenberg apple.'

The young girl smiled sadly at this compliment from the good old bachelor, and turned to brush away the tears which ran down her cheeks, but her heart was brimful of grief, and an occasional drop would run over in spite of her attempts to check it.

Mr. Precise saw her little hand pressed against her forehead, and asked in a kind tone:

'Does your head ache, my dear?'

'Oh yes, sir, *very* much! It is very hot!'

The old gentleman looked at her lips as she spoke, for he heard her voice tremble, and he noticed that they were very white, and quivered as she spoke.

'Poor girl, you are feverish! You must go to bed! You shall have a doctor!'

'Oh no, sir, I am not very sick! don't go to any expense for me!' murmured the girl, who indeed felt sick.

'But I will!' said the old gentleman, feeling her pulse and at once detecting the fever—and he hurried to the bell and rang it.

The maid took her own time to answer it, for after waiting several minutes, Mr. Precise had taken hold of the bell-pull to ring it again, when Jenny made her appearance:

'Did you want me, sir?'

‘Yes, to be sure I did, you lazy huzzy! Why don’t you move when you hear me ring.’

‘I *did* come sir!’ replied the maid spitefully, looking angrily at poor Angelina, as if to say, ‘this is all your fault—I’d like to scratch your eyes out.’

‘Then go for a doctor, and be quick about it.’

‘What, sir, are *you* sick?’

‘No—confound it—hurry along, and don’t stand there to ask questions!’

Jenny turned to go, but she had one more question to ask.

‘What doctor shall I call, sir?’

‘WATSON, to be sure. I never have any other inside of my doors, you know!’

‘But, sir, what shall I tell him? you are not sick.’

‘Confound the girl, she’ll drive me mad! Go and tell him I want him as soon as he can come! Now hurry!’

Having now no more questions to ask, Jenny retired, moving, however, very slowly.

Mr. Precise had heretofore been patient, but his red face grew much redder than usual, and following her to the door, he said angrily:

‘Jenny, if you behave in this way, I’ll discharge you in the morning.’

‘Then you’ll have to pay me my month’s wages—for you hav’n’t given me warning!’

‘So I will—but I don’t care, I’ll not put up with your impudence.’

‘It’s all along of your bringin’ that nasty little good for nothin’ into the house!’ replied the maid, putting her apron up to her eyes; ‘I never was treated so before, I wasn’t, and it’s too bad it is, after bein’ so good to me as you have, and makin’ me love you so.’

Jenny now began to sob very loudly, thinking that tears would subdue her master, if her angry tongue could not, but he was not in a humour which she could reach, for he slammed the door too, without replying again.

‘Well, I never!’ cried Jenny, ceasing her sobs as the door closed—‘I do believe he’s gone stark stavin’ demented! I’ll make her pay for this—I will! I’ll get a doctor, and I’ll take my own time a doing on it too! She sleep with me indeed! I reckon there’s two to make a bargain about that! Why I’d rather sleep alone all my life—and that would be dreadful! Oh dear, I wish Francis was here! This last whim of my master’s beats everythin’ in Shakspeare all holler, so it does!’

While Jenny was thus indignantly soliloquizing, she was preparing to go after the doctor, which she did after a delay of full half an hour.

Meantime the fever was rapidly rising in the burning veins of poor Angelina, and though she did not murmur, or utter

one word of complaint, her quivering limbs, throbbing pulse, and mildly flashing eyes, all told of the fearful progress of pain and disease.

Mr. Precise watched the poor sufferer, as she lay there upon his sofa, and often did he go to the door and look out, to see if the doctor was not coming. The doctor came at last, and when he looked upon his patient he sighed, for he was a kind hearted man.

'You should have sent for me before!' he said, in a low whisper, to Mr. Precise; 'I am afraid she will not have strength to bear the medicine necessary to break such a fever. She is very weak!'

'Poor thing! Do all you can for her!' said Mr. Precise, wiping away a couple of great tears which trickled his cheeks, as they ran down two ravines, leading to the corners of his mouth.

'Yes, yes. We must hope for the best, and do all we can. Have her at once undressed and put to bed in a cool room; I will make out a prescription!' replied the doctor, taking one of his cards out, and writing upon it.

Mr. Precise again called for Jenny, and she, who really had no wish to leave her place, and had many reasons for desiring to keep it, now obeyed him, and assisted in placing the poor girl in her bed. She also hurried to the nearest apothecary's for the medicine, and quite made Mr. Precise forget her former misconduct in her present officiousness.

Mr. Precise himself sat and watched by the side of the sufferer, preparing her medicine with his own hands, and really seeming to feel as much interest in her fate, as if she were indeed his daughter.

In finding such a friend for poor Angelina in this last deep trial, God had indeed proved that he cared for the fatherless!

CHAPTER III.

WE presume that you are curious, reader, to know the fate of the unfortunate sister of Charles Meadows.

We left her, just entering the room of Emma Wood, while Henry Whitmore, in a fearful angry mood, was ascending the stairs.

When he reached the landing, Emma asked in a tone as careless as she could assume:

'Where is she? Has she not gone out?'

'Curse me if I know,' replied the libertine. 'She has hardly had a chance, for the door opening to the entry was not closed; we must have seen her if she had passed that way.'

'But where can she be? Didn't she go out by the back-door?' asked the woman, wishing, if possible, to keep him from the right track of his victim.

'No,' replied he, 'I tried that door, and found it locked on the inside. I believe she's in the house yet, and if she is, by the Hand that made me, I'll have her.'

Whitmore sternly looked Emma in the face as he said this, and while he noticed how pale she turned, and that her eye avoided meeting his, his suspicions became aroused, and he cried in a stern and bitter tone:

'Emma, I'm not in a humour to be trifled with! If you know where she is, you'd better give her up. I warn you now, for hell is in me to-night.'

For a moment the courtesan kept silent. Oh, what a moment of agony was that for poor Isabella. There she lay, within three steps, and heard the terrible threat, and she knew that one word from the lips of the woman, nay, one sign from her hand, would disclose her place of concealment, and then, what could she, a weak, terror-stricken, helpless girl, do against his inhuman force and strength.

And when the courtesan spoke, the wretched girl, for one moment, was thrown into the unutterable agony of believing herself betrayed, for the woman replied to Whitmore:

'I *do* know where she is! You must think you *are* somebody, to scare *me* with your big words!'

'I don't want to scare you, Em!' replied the villain, lowering his tone a little, 'but if you know where she is, just tell me!'

'Don't you wish I would?' said the girl sarcastically.

'Yes, indeed I do. Come, Em, I'll give you an X.'

'Not enough!' replied the girl carelessly.

'Then, I'll double it.'

'Not enough yet!'

'Why blast the thing, Em, you must think I'm made of gold!'

'No, I don't! You're like Sam Selden there's more brass in your composition than any other metal!'

'Well, Em, dropping all these compliments, what will you take to tell me?'

Oh! how poor Isabella trembled while she heard this conversation!

Emma Wood paused a moment after Whitmore's last question, and then said:

'A cool hundred!'

'Well, tell me?'

'Haud over the tin!' replied the woman.

'I've given you nearly all I have with me. I'll let you have it to-morrow! I've nothing but a twenty dollar bill.'

'No—no; to-morrow is a bad pay-day!' replied the girl.

‘I’ll give you my note!’

‘I don’t want your note—I’d make a pretty face trying to collect it, wouldn’t I, if you chose to refuse payment. They’d ask whether it was for value received, I suppose!’

‘Blast it, you seem to want to plague me to night!’ cried Whitmore angrily; then, as he glanced at his hand, he saw a ring which Isabella had in an hour of confidence and fondness placed on his finger. It was a diamond, set in a very antique manner, and had been an heir-loom in her family—one, which she would never have parted with, except to an affianced husband. Glancing at this ring, Whitmore said:

‘Here’s security. There’s a ring worth double the money. You may have that if you’ll tell me.’

‘Well, give it to me,’ said Emma.

In a moment it was on her finger.

Isabella was about to spring from beneath the bed where she had crept, and had determined to leap from the window even at the risk of destruction, when Emma said to Whitmore:

‘She is in the street somewhere! I saw her go out when you was talking to me in the back parlour.’

‘Curse you, is this the information!’ cried Whitmore, almost bursting with anger.

‘Yes. Ha! Ha! I’ve done you out of the ring, eh?’ laughed the girl.

‘Which way did she go?’ shouted Whitmore.

‘How could I tell? I saw her slip out of the entry, and I wasn’t agoing to tell, for I do think it’s a shame for you to hunt that poor girl about so, when there’s plenty prettier ones and good enough for you too, that are ruined now!’

Whitmore paused a moment to think what plan to pursue. If, as Emma said, Isabella had escaped, he supposed that she would be able to reach her home before he could overtake her; and moreover, he knew that if she had once actually gained the street, it would be a difficult and dangerous business for him to try to bring her back when policemen and others were continually passing.

Isabella now began to breathe more freely, for she hoped that the courtesan would not betray her.

Whitmore again looked at Emma, and he still noticed that her eye was averted from his gaze, as it had been while she spoke. He felt sure that she had not told him the truth, but he determined to find it out if possible. Dissimulation was his plan.

‘Well,’ said he, ‘If I *must* give up the chase, I suppose I must, but it is hard to lose twelve or fourteen hundred dollars for nothing on a poor chit of a girl like her!’

‘It would have been harder for her to lose what all the gold in the world could not buy back to her—her virtue and purity!’ said Emma, coldly.

‘So it would, my fair philosopher, and we’ll drop the subject!’ said Harry carelessly, and then he added:

‘I’ll go home, I believe, or up to Carlton’s! you’re too cross for my company to-night!’

Thus saying, he turned away, passed down the stairs, and in a few moments Emma heard the street door slammed heavily after him.

She went into her own room, where Isabella met her with tears of gratitude.

‘Oh! God bless you!’ she cried, kissing her fervently, ‘you have saved me from worse than death. Oh, that I had the means of repaying you!’

‘You have repaid me!’ replied Emma. ‘One such pure kiss as that, one such prayer for God’s blessing on my guilty head, is worth a thousand such acts.’

Who would have thought it! tears, great warm tears, came from that lost girl’s large black eyes.

The well of human feeling was not quite dried up in her heart. Though steeped in guilt, though hardened in very misery, she proved that there were yet fruitful spots in her heart; that there was at least one sunnyspot in her character. And who will dare to say that such as she cannot be drawn from the sea of wretchedness where they have fallen? Who will say, pass them by and let them perish! Oh God! why should the cry of perishing thousands go up in this city, and no aid be extended to them!

But to return to our story. Emma Wood’s heart was touched by the blessings and caresses of the poor girl whom she had tried to aid, and she determined as soon as possible to get her out of that house and its impure neighbourhood. Therefore she said to Isabella:

‘You must not stay here! he will be sure to come back and find you—you know your way home?’

‘Yes, but I feel so weak!’ murmured the girl.

‘Never mind, I’ll go and get you a carriage,’ said Emma; ‘I’ll not be gone a moment. Lock the door inside, and when I come back I’ll give three knocks, and you’ll know it is me. Ah! what made you start so?’

‘I thought I heard a noise outside of the door,’ replied Isabella, trembling.

Emma stepped to the door, looked out in the entry, but saw no one.

‘It was only your fancy,’ said she, and then continued:

‘I’ll go and get you a carriage, and see you safe in, and then I shall feel contented.’

‘I feel afraid to stay here alone,’ sighed Isabella.

‘Oh! no one will come in. I’ll lock the street door behind me as I go out, and I’ll not be gone more than a few minutes.’

‘Well, go, I will try to be calm,’ murmured Isabella. And

yet when Emma left her, the poor girl turned still more pale, and trembled as she heard the sound of her steps dying away in the distance.

She locked the door inside, as she had been directed, however, and then knelt down by the bedside and prayed—prayed fervently to God to save and protect her in the peril which environed her. Her heart was full of dread, yet; she could not feel safe under that roof.

Only a few moments elapsed, when she heard quick steps ascending the stairs, and her heart for a moment almost stopped beating in her anxiety. But she heard the signal, the three low taps upon the door, agreed upon to denote the return of Emma, and she hurried to the door to open it.

As she drew back the bolt, the door flew open, and she shrieked as she saw Harry Whitmore before her.

She would have fallen to the floor, but his arms elapsed her, and he drew her form to his breast, now swelling with the pride of his villanous triumph.

‘So, so, my fair lady! thought you was free, eh! You didn’t know what a persevering lover you had! Ha! ha!’

She did not hear his taunts. She did not feel the burning and passionate kisses which he imprinted on her lips. She did not see the fiery glances which he bestowed on her form, beautiful even in its disordered dress, her face lovely in even its death-like pallor.

‘Fainted, eh? so much the better for me; I can manage her more easily!’ he muttered, and then raising her from the floor, he bore her out, and closing the door behind her, hurried down stairs. He carried the still senseless girl into the front parlour, and closing the door which opened from that room into the entry, awaited the return of Emma Wood with the carriage.

He had but a moment to delay, for, as he closed the door, he heard the wheels of the approaching carriage dashing along the pavement.

In another minute the hack stopped at the door, Emma hurried out, and telling the driver that the lady would be out in a minute, passed by the door where Whitmore stood with the insensible girl in his arms, and hurried up stairs. The moment after, Whitmore stepped noiselessly out, and finding the back door open, quickly lifted poor Isabella in, saying to the driver:

‘It’s all right, my man, go ahead!’

‘Is this the sick lady, sir?’ asked the coachman.

‘Yes—yes, drive on!’ cried Whitmore impatiently, for he feared the return of Emma Wood to the door.

‘Where to, sir?’ said the driver.

‘To 100, Church Street!’ replied Whitmore, ‘and be quick; she is very sick, I want her taken home!’

'What to old Ma'am Swett's?' asked the driver, as he closed the door.

'Yes, to be sure; be quick, and I'll give you a *ten spot*!'

'Oh, very well, sir!' said the driver, making more haste, 'if it is to be paid for, I'll do my work, and ask no questions, but that's a funny place to take a sick young *lady* to, I think!'

He drove off, just as Emma, finding her room tenantless, came down stairs. She could not comprehend the reason of this, until she saw a white scarf which had been worn by Isabella, lying upon the door step, and then she thought that Isabella had gone into the carriage of her own accord, and hurried the driver off.

'I do think it was a little ungrateful of her to go off, and never say good-bye!' she said, 'but the poor thing was frightened out of her wits!'

Little did she dream that the wretched girl was again in the power of her infamous persecutor, and that he was bearing her away to a den of infamy, where no one would raise a hand to save her; where all were so low and vile, so guilty themselves, that they would only glory in aiding to make another as bad as they were.

This he knew well, and when he found that he could not complete his villany at Madame I.'s, he determined to take his victim to a place where he would be secure from interruption.

It was late, and his carriage drove along through silent streets, but it had not very far to go, ere the driver drew up before the house which he had named.

'Ring the bell and ask Madame S. to step here a moment. Tell her Harry Whitmore wants to see her,' said Whitmore to the driver, as the latter opened the carriage door.

'My fare first, if you please, sir!' said the driver, who had evidently dealt with some of the fancy city bucks before.

'Certainly, and if you'll give me your word not to tell the woman that hired you, where you drove to, or that you saw me at all, I'll give you a *twenty*!'

'Done. I'll keep as mum as a mouse when the cat's about.'

Whitmore handed him the twenty dollar bill and the driver then rang the bell. In a few moments the door was opened, and in answer to Whitmore's message, a middle sized, dark-eyed, red-faced specimen of fallen womanity made her appearance.

Whitmore whispered his wishes in her ear, and told him that his victim was there in his arms senseless.

'I've only one objection. All my rooms are occupied,' said she.

'Who has the third story, back room?' asked Whitmore.

'French Rose!' replied Madame S.

'She pays you ten dollars a week for it!'

'Yes!'

'I'll give you a hundred, if you'll let me have everything my own way!' said Whitmore.

'And let me keep the girl when you cast her off?' asked the woman, while her dark eyes flashed brighter than usual, at the prospect of gain.

'Yes, if you can. I don't want her long. I want to break that infernal pride of hers, and make her pay for the trouble she's given me!'

'Well, then, you may have the room, but the front garret would be more quiet. There are thick shutters on the side that fronts the street!'

'Well, well, anywhere, so that I can be quick. She acts as if she was coming to!' cried Harry.

'Then bring her in!' said the trafficker in the misery of her sex.

As Harry obeyed, and lifted the poor girl out of the carriage, the fresh air somewhat revived her, and opening her eyes, she saw the face of Whitmore.

She screamed faintly and struggled to get away, but he instantly put his hand over her mouth, and was hurrying in, when a lot of young fellows who were just going in turned and met him on the steps. They were evidently some of the b'hoys, and tolerably elevated.

'Ello!' cried one, 'what's this ere chap a doin'?'

Seeing that they were not men with whom he was acquainted, Whitmore tried to push on, while Madame S. replied to the first speaker:

'It's only one of my girls drunk, and this gentleman is taking her in.'

'Well then, let her slide!' said the b'hoy, 'but I say, old oman, aren't you agoin' to stan' treat?'

'Oh! go away now, and don't make a fuss!'

'No, we don't, old lady, if yer don't stan' treat. We're the b'hoys, *we are, ourselves!* We've brought a strange b'hoy here to see your house, and you've got to treat, bee the Laud—yer have!'

'Well—well, go in, and I'll treat if you'll keep quiet and don't kick up a row!' replied the landlady.

The carriage now drove off, and Whitmore having carried his victim up stairs, the landlady entered the well furnished parlour with her forced guests:

Her dark eyes flashed angrily as she saw the b'hoys spout their tobacco-juice over her beautiful carpets, but she dared not say anything to offend them, else her looking glasses and other furniture would have been sure to suffer *some*.

It was strange, but true, that though she cared little for the police, or any who had a legal right to enter her doors,

and disturb her establishment, she scarcely dared to call her soul her own before the new-comers.

They ordered wine—she got it for them; they kissed her girls, and cuffed them round to hear them squeal, yet no one thought of resisting their ‘innocent familiarities.’

At last, when the wine was brought up and poured out, the one who hailed Whitmore on the steps, cried out:

‘Are ye all loaded and primed, *gents*?’

Each of the b’hoys replied, as they held a brimming glass aloft:

‘We aint nuthin’ else, Mose, *we* aint!’

‘Then fire away! No, hold on, till I interduce the strange b’hoy to the boss she!’ cried the young man who seemed leader of the crowd, and who was known by the antique, but abbreviated cognomen, ‘Mose.’

As he said this, he led out a short, dandified, grey-eyed, light-haired, brown-whiskered individual, and addressing himself to Madame S., said:

‘Lookee yer, old ’oman! this ere chap is one of the b’hoys, and he’s from down east, he *is*! We’ve taken him in, and he’s one of *us*! He *is* a little *dressy*, but that’s nuthin’—he’s a tailor, and carries his sign on his back!’

‘What’s his name? I think I’ve seen him before!’ said the landlady, fixing her dark eyes upon him.

‘Oh! well, *you* my call him Smith or Jones, jest as you like, but we calls him the Apostle, we does!’

‘Why so? He don’t look very much like a preacher.’

‘No,’ replied Mose. ‘Nor he don’t look werry like a soger, but he *is*, and a *full* private at that. Why, he’s one of the b’hoys, I told yer, and nothin’ else. He’s a traveller, been to HOLMES’S HOLE, and other sich places of worship. Here’s to him—let’s drhink.’

Mose set the example, and soon the bumpers had disappeared down sundry exceedingly capacious throats.

‘Well, wots to pay? Wots the damage?’ asked Mose.

‘Let me see, three bottles champagne—nine dollars for the general run of folks, but only *seven* for you,’ replied the landlady, who began to hope that the b’hoys would for once pay up; but when Mose spoke again, her hope fell still-born.

‘Don’t yer wish you may get it?’ he said making the masonic sign with his thumb resting upon the end of his nose, and his four fingers performing sundry singular antics near the end of his nasal member.

‘Yes, I do!’ she replied spitefully.

‘Then charge it to profit and loss. You’ll rob Peter to pay Paul, you’ll not lose by it!’

‘I hopes you’re not personal, Mister Mose!’ said the down-cast b’hoy, turning rather red in the face.

'Well—don't know as I vos, but if yer think so, and want to make a muss about it, why jist say so, that's all !'

'No—I do not want to make no row,' replied the fellow, turning exceedingly pale, as he regarded the decidedly combative attitude of Mose, 'only as you call me the 'Postle, I didn't know, Mose, but you meant suthing in that last speech.'

'Well, then, there wont be no row in this ere meetin'—but I say !' said Mose, again confronting the landlady, 'do you know Jack Scott ?'

'No, nor I don't want to,' replied Madame S., who was quite put out of sorts by such unprofitable customers.

'Well, you needn't be quite so crusty about it. Jack Scott and Bill Kirby are b'hoys, they are ! Ned Forrest is some, but he aint a touch to Jack Scott when he wraps himself up in the star spangled banner and goes for to die—three cheers for Jack Scott !'

Three hearty cheers were given, which Madame S. neither joined in nor approved of, for she cried, as soon as her voice could be heard—

'Don't make so much noise, for Heaven's sake, gentlemen ; you'll have the police in here—you'll ruin me !'

'It's cussed hard to spile a rotten egg !' cried Mose ; 'an' as to yer police, jist bring on a cord or two on 'em. We can lick the crowd, *we* can !'

No police came, and the b'hoys becoming tired of the fun there, proposed going to some other gilded hall of infamy to put the 'she boss' through, as they had Mrs. S.

They therefore left her, and she was very well satisfied to get off from such a crowd with so little damage.

The moment after they had gone, Whitmore came down stairs, and handing Madame S. a key, said :

'You'll have to go and doctor that fool of a girl. I cannot get her out of her fainting fit. The moment she opens her eyes and sees me, she goes off again. I'll leave her till to-morrow evening, and so you attend to her and try to bring her to herself. Tell her not to be a fool. I have determined to make her mine, and mine she must be, willing or not !'

'I'll see what I can do with her, Harry,' said the landlady, taking the key from him ; 'but wont you take a glass of wine ?'

'No, I thank you,' replied he, 'I'm going round to Carlton's to win four or five hundred, and I want to keep my nerves steady. Wont you lend me fifty to begin with ?—I'll return it to-morrow.'

'Certainly,' replied the landlady, 'you have first-rate security in the house !' and she laughed as she took the money from her purse and handed it to him.

CHAPTER IV.

WHITMORE hurried from Church Street around to the hell of Carlton. It was quite a fashionable hour when he arrived.—The guests of Mr. C. had supped, and were already clustered before the other table, behind which Mr. Sam Selden sat, assisted by a genteel-looking, grey-headed gentleman, who acted as banker in the absence of Mr. Carlton, who had other business to attend to just at that moment.

Whitmore first visited the side board, and partook of some of Mr. Carlton's extra-fine brandy, in order to settle his nerves for the game. As he was pouring out the liquor, a tap upon his shoulder caused him to turn quickly around, and he saw, standing before him, *Charles Meadows*.

The shock of seeing him was so sudden, and Meadows looked so pale, that Whitmore for a moment entirely lost his self-possession, and dropped his half-filled glass to the floor, where it was shattered into atoms. But as he saw that a faint smile was forming on the countenance of Meadows, and that his face, though haggard and pale, did not wear the looks of anger, the self-convicted villain recovered himself enough to respond to the friendly salutation of the young clerk.

'Why, how pale you look! are you sick?' asked the latter of Whitmore, as he noticed his evident agitation.

'No—yes—that is, I'm not sick, but I'm not very well. I felt dizzy just now, and came to take some brandy to try and settle my nerves,' replied the villain.

'Well, I'll join you, I'm not well to-night myself,' said Meadows.

'No,' responded Whitmore, 'you look badly—what is the matter?'

'Nothing, only I've rather over-worked myself lately!' replied the clerk, with a carelessness which completely reassured Whitmore.

They both filled their glasses with brandy slightly diluted, and drank.

'Do you intend to play to-night?' asked Meadows.

'Yes, I believe I'll try my hand. I've a fifty to lose: will you play?'

'No, I think not,' replied Meadows. 'I'm rather short, just now—had to give my mother a hundred this evening, for rent!'

'Go me halves, with mine?'

'Thank you, Harry, but I'd rather look on and see you play. You always win!'

'Yes, generally in all kinds of games!' said Harry, with a

smile, which would have seemed meaning to any one, except one so confiding as Meadows.

They turned to go to the faro-table, but just at that moment another person entered, whom they waited for. It was Gus Livingston. He looked surprised to see Whitmore there, but calmly returned the salutation of both the young men.

'Why, where have you been, Harry? I've been looking everywhere for you. I just left the Count and a crowd at Jim Decatur's room, at the C——n, where they were having a quiet little private game of poker—I thought you'd be there.'

'No—that's a small potato crowd!' replied Whitmore; 'I've been spending a very agreeable evening in the company of ladies. I just left Charley's sister and mine; by the way, Charley, Miss Isabella is a very fine musician!'

'Yes, she has very fine natural taste, and I've had the best masters for her!' replied the unsuspecting brother.

Livingston had exchanged glances with Whitmore, and thought by the look of the latter that he had triumphed.—Filling a glass for himself from a decanter on the side board, he said:

'I'll propose her health! Join me in it!'

'With all my heart!' said Whitmore, 'may she be always as happy as she is now!'

'Ha! ha! she ought to be happy in having such a demnition fine fellow for a———brother!' said Livingston, in a singular tone.

Meadows did not notice the tone, but poured out another glass, and drank it off. He was evidently bent on trying to drown the memory of his guilt. He did not even object to a third glass before they approached the faro-table.

When they took a stand in front of the dealer, Whitmore looked at Sam Selden, and cried:

'Here, Sam, let's have this fifty broken into five dollar checks. I'm going to win my night's expenses!'

Taking up the fifty dollar bill which the young man tossed over to him, Selden bowed very politely, and passed it to the banker, who soon handed out its equivalent pile of red checks.

'Ready for the deal!' said the handsome gambler, showing his white teeth, and smiling upon the betters.

'Don't abbreviate, Sam just say ready for the devil!' cried Harry, placing five of his checks upon a card.

'Dem'd good, that, Harry! More truth than poetry!' cried Gus. Livingston.

But their conversation was cut short as the deal commenced.

Whitmore has placed his money upon the Jack, and in a few moments it was drawn, and upon his side.

'The *knave* wins, sir,' said the polite Selden, smiling maliciously as he emphasised the word.

'Ha! ha! he hit you there,' cried Gus.

'Will you take up your bet, sir?' asked Selden of Whitmore.

'No, let it lay, the *knave* may win again!' said Harry.

The deal went on, and the knave not only won once, but four times in succession, leaving Whitmore the winner of four hundred dollars on that card.

'There, that'll do for to night!' said Harry, when the deal was out: 'just hand me over the change for those checks—I don't want any more just now!'

'Where'll we go?' asked Gus, as the three young men drew back from the crowd which fronted the faro table.

'Anywhere, for fun!' said Harry. 'I've no engagements this evening!'

'Morning, you mean. It's after twelve!' said Meadows, looking at his watch.

'Well, it's no matter. Let's go and have something to eat, Florence is open yet!' cried Harry.

'I'd rather drink!' said Meadows; 'let's go upon a bender, I haven't been on one for some time now!'

'Agreed!' cried the other two; and by way of a foundation for future potations, they took another glass of Carlton's brandy.

'Well,—which way?' cried Meadows, whose spirits began to rise with the effects of the liquor.

'Won't you go to Jule's, and see the angel of darkness that fooled you so nicely—Kate Hall?' asked Whitmore.

'No, not there. I've had enough of her!' replied Meadows.

'Let's go to old Swett's!' cried Gus. Livingston.

'I'm agreed, anywhere!' cried Meadows.

'But not there!' said Whitmore, quickly. 'I won't go to Swett's!'

'Why not?' asked both the others.

'Because I don't like her place—it's a low hole!' replied Whitmore.

'So much the better—we can kick up a spree there and nobody will know us!' said Meadows.

'Well, if you *will* have it so, go a-head!' said Whitmore, in a bitter tone; 'but may-be you'll wish you had not gone!'

'What the devil sets you against her so?' asked Gus. Livingston with surprise.

'Oh nothing, go on, I will follow!' cried Whitmore.

The three now started out, but at the front-doorway they were met by Carlton.

He smiled as he saw Meadows.

'You are the very man I was thinking of, Meadows!' said he, 'and the one whom I wished most to see!'

'Ah, indeed! Well, sir, you *do* see me!' said Meadows, with difficulty repressing a shudder, as he gazed upon the man and remembered the dreadful scene of that morning.

'Yes, but I must see you alone!' replied the gambler, in a pleasant but decided tone.

'I'm just now engaged. You see I have company!' said Meadows.

'I cannot help it, sir,' replied Carlton; 'business must take precedence of pleasure!'

'This is no business hour!' said Meadows sulkily.

'*Hours* were not specified in your *bond*!' said Carlton in a low whisper, bending his head close to Meadows's ear.

The young man turned ghastly pale, and rather groaned than spoke:

'What do you want with me?'

'Dismiss your companions, and come with me. You shall soon learn!' replied the gambler, sternly. 'Remember, sir, that you are mine now, body and soul.'

Poor Meadows felt that this, alas! was but too true, and turning to his comrades, said:

'I can't go with you, boys. Carlton and I have business together which I had forgotten. You must excuse me.'

'Certainly!' cried Whitmore, glad of any excuse which would break off this proposed visit to Church Street.

'Well, did you ever!' said Gus, as Carlton went up stairs with Meadows. 'Why Charley turned as pale as a ghost when Carlton whispered to him. He don't seem to dare to call his soul his own—what can "cow" him down so, before Carlton?'

'I suppose he owes him money,' said Whitmore. 'Charley hasn't got hardened yet, enough to look a man boldly in the face whom he owes.'

'Poor fellow, he's too tender-hearted to belong to our set then!' said Gus. 'Why if Jim Decatur and the Count and some of the rest of us didn't owe all the tailors and jewellers in town, we'd be miserable. Charley can't be aware of the exquisite pleasure one feels in damning a dun! But I forgot—where's his sister?'

'In bed, I suppose!' said Whitmore, who seemed not to feel particularly communicative.

'Well, how did you get along after I left you?'

'Well enough!' said Whitmore, and then before the other could ask any more questions, he added:

'Good night—I'm going home!'

'But, Harry, stop—let's go over to Florence's and have one more drink. What's got into you to-night?'

'The *devil*,' replied Whitmore gruffly, and turning on his heel he walked quickly up into Broadway.

'Well, I believe so!' muttered Livingston, looking in

astonishment upon the receding form of his friend, and then slowly taking the same direction.

He had gone but a few steps, when he heard a noise in the direction taken by Whitmore, which indicated a row. Gus. was not exactly a coward, though not overstocked with bravery, and as he detected the sound of Whitmore's voice in a loud key, he hurried on to his assistance.

He found him at the corner just above Florence's, surrounded by a set of fellows who seemed crazy drunk, and who were in fact the same whom we have already seen at the house in Church street.

'So *ho*, try to run over a b'hoy rough-shod, would yer !' cried the leader of the gang to Whitmore, who it appeared had offended him in some way.

'Get out of the way, or by Heaven I'll let daylight through you !' said Whitmore, attempting to proceed, and drawing a dirk from his bosom.

'So, you'd stick a feller, would yer !' cried Mose, adding a tremendous oath, 'I'll show yer a trick of the Bowery, *I* will !' and in a moment a whizzing sound was heard, as he whirled something in circles around his head.

Whitmore advanced, and crash came the heavy slung-shot down upon his raised arm, and it fell powerless by his side, dropping the knife, for the bone was broken.

'Go it, Mose ! Give him hell !' cried the b'hoys, and again the terrible weapon came crashing down upon his head, though with less force, for his hat partly broke the blow. Yet it was very severe, entirely stunning him.

'Hays !' cried the crowd. 'Hays, Mose, you've done him !' and the b'hoys made off at full speed.

Livingston arrived in a moment after, and found Whitmore senseless, and bleeding very badly. Summoning the watch, he had him carried to his own rooms, which were near, and called a surgeon.

The latter at once examined his injuries, which were found very severe, and placed his broken arm in splints. The wound on the head, however, had only served to stun him for the time, and within three or four hours he had recovered his senses, enough to know his own situation.

'Curse the luck !' he muttered—'it seems as if the devil was disposed to thwart me in everything just now ! How soon can I move, doctor !'

'You ought not to think of it under three weeks, and then with care !' replied the surgeon.

'Three weeks ? Damnation !' muttered the libertine fiercely. 'If it costs my life, I'll be out in three days !'

'You'll do it at your own risk ! Your arm is very badly broken !' said the doctor.

It was now nearly dawn, and Whitmore, calling Gus. Livingston to his side, said in a low whisper,—

‘There are four hundred and twenty-five dollars in my pocket, Gus.!’

‘Yes,’ replied that worthy,—‘what can I do for you, Harry?’

‘Just take two hundred of it around to old Ma’am Swett’s, and tell her how I’m fixed. Tell her to keep that bird in the cage safe for me, and I’ll be around as soon as I can. The other two hundred and twenty-five you can have!’

‘Thank you!’ replied Gus., ‘but what bird do you mean? Not Charley’s sister?’

‘Yes,—I’ve got her there, but as you value me and your own life, keep it mum. Don’t let it get out, or she may escape me before I am well. Tell old Swett to keep the secret, and she’ll be no loser!’

‘Certainly I will, but by Jove, Harry, you *are* a genius! Nothing puts you out,’ said the echo, filled with admiration at the villany of his leader.

CHAPTER V.

‘AH, ha! I see you ’ave one ver select companie!’ cried our old friend Captain Tobin, as he entered Jack Circle’s crib.

The very select company consisted of Black Bill, Jack Murphy, Tilda Smith, Harriet Circle, Long Bill, Charley Cooper, and a few more of the ‘fraternity,’ who were enjoying a quiet smoke and ‘summat vet.’

Ah, ha! one ver select companie, Capitan Shack!’

Ello! Uncle Tommy!’ cried old Jack, as he recognised his visitor; ‘tip us your mauley, my cove.’

The Frenchman then bowing very politely to Harriet Circle, said:

‘If you please, Mademoiselle—will you make for me one of your shin cock-tail superbe?’

‘I won’t do nothin’ else, Uncle Tommy!’ replied the girl, and hurried away to prepare his gin cock-tail.

She came up in a few moments, accompanied by Frank Hennock, who had just arrived.

Frank had now gained a position, which made him ‘somebody’ in the crowd, and his arrival was noticed by all of the rest. The party was at the same time augmented by the arrival of another of the gang, Big Lize.

Her face was flushed, as if she had been drinking,—and her eyes were flashing with anger or excitement.

‘Ello, Lize! What’s up now?’ cried old Circle, as he noticed her excited looks upon entering.

'Give me some gin!' she muttered almost fiercely,—'give me some gin, I'm in trouble!'

'What, 'avent you 'eard nuthin' 'o the gal yet?' asked Cooper, who had evidently seen her since the loss of Angelina.

'No,—I've been back to that crib in Greenwich street, and it wasn't her as was there arter all!' cried the woman, emptying a glass of gin at a single draught.

'What're ye patterin' habout?' asked old Circle.

'Nuthin' as concerns the bizness!' replied Cooper: 'it's honly some private trouble of Lize's!'

'Vel, vot is it? Can't we 'elp her?'

'Not's I see. She's lost the run o' a cousin o' hers, a poor young gal as she'd taken a likin' to.'

'Oh's that all? I didn't know but she'd been up afore his 'onour!' said Jack Circle.

'D'ye think I'd care for that, you noddy?' said Lize, spitefully. 'I don't care no more for his 'onor than I do for you, and that aint much; but if I don't find that 'ere poor gal afore I'm much older, I'll burn half o' this town up!'

'An' be jabers but a *summery* way that 'ud be to find her!' cried Jack Murphy, 'there 'ud be warm weather if ye wor to do it!'

'I don't want none o' your jokes, but I've a favour to ask of you all!' cried Lize.

'Then spake out, as the young 'un said to the cat, when he pinched her tail!' cried Mr. Murphy.

'I want you all when you're on the tramp, to keep a look-out for this girl, my cousin. She's about sixteen year old, and very an'some!'

'Then there's no family resemblance!' said Mr. Murphy, rather ungallantly.

Lize, however, did not heed his remark, but continued:

'She's got bright brown hair all in curls—blue eyes, that look as if they were made for an angel, and is pale and thin a little now, cause she's seen trouble!'

Frank Hennock stepped up to Lize, and was about to speak, when she added:

'I'll give a hundred dollars to any one of ye that'll find her for me!'

Frank paused when he heard this, and pressed the remark he was about to make. He thought that he recognised in the description, the young girl who was at his master's, but he determined to see Lize alone, ask her some questions, and then, if his supposition was correct, he could quietly pocket the reward which Lize offered.

At that moment the usual signal was given, and another person entered from outside. It was Carlton, and he was alone.

'Well, Mr. Carlton, wot habout that 'ere lay. Isn't it time

we was a doin suthin? If the boys don't 'ave some work afore long they'll forget 'ow. There's nuthin like keepin' their 'ands in !'

'That's true, Jack,' replied Carlton, 'you may look out for the first rainy night. But have you picked out a place to stow the goods away in?'

'Yes, 'Til Smith's dad—the old city Bank covey, has a snuggerie up town, as 'll do.'

'Well, that's settled now; what about old Precise?'

'You may crack his crib as soon as you like,' said Frank, stepping forward, 'I'm tired of stoppin' there, and I'm afraid there'll be apparent reasons for my leaving before long at any rate !'

Why, what's up?' asked old Circle.

'Don't be afther axin the young gentleman questions as makes 'im blush !' cried Jack Murphy, 'didn't he say the reasons would soon be *apparent*, when only his modesty kept him from saying out bouldly, that it 'ud be 'imself that 'ud be *a-parent*.'

'He's hit it,' said Frank, 'and the sooner I get out of the house the better I'll be pleased.'

'Ow much of a swag can we lift?' asked Black Bill.

'Why some ready tin—a set of silver—gold watch and chain, a little jewellery, and some duds, that's all.'

'Arn't the young 'oman saved up suthin?' asked Long Bill.

'Yes—but I'm principled against taking her earnings. It's all she's got, and she'll need it before long.'

'The young 'un's right,' said old Circle, then turning to Carlton, he asked :

''Ave you tried the checque?'

Carlton replied, by throwing down a roll of bank notes upon the table.

'Them's the tickets,' said Circle, as he gathered up the lot.

'Don't you think we can can try it on agin?'

'We might for a small figure,' replied the gambler.

'Then, young 'un spose you do us another checque,' said Circle, addressing himself to Frank.

'For how much?' asked the young villain.

'It won't do to risk over five hundred,' said Carlton.

'I'll give it to you to-morrow,' said Frank; 'but when are we to divide and share off?'

'Next Sunday,' replied Circle, 'that is, if all 'ands are hagreed.'

A general assent was given, and Frank Hennock then asked, when he might expect a visit from the gang at his master's.

'I've left that 'ere lay to Black Bill and Jack Murphy,' said Circle.

'When will you be up?' asked Frank of these *gentlemen*.

'At our airliest convayniance, my honey!' said Jack, 'and we hope the ould gintilman wont throuble himself to sit up for us!'

The plans for robbing the Broadway store and the house of Mr. Precise were now duly canvassed and discussed by the whole party, and the men picked out who were to attend to the business. Several other lays were also mentioned, but these were to be deferred until the two first had been attended to.

'I wonder 'ow Genlis is adoin' with his lay!' asked Circle of Carlton.

'First rate—let him have his own way in that!' said the latter, 'he's keen!'

'Aye, you're more than 'alf right there!' said Circle, 'and now let's all take summat vet!'

Finding that the business was over, Frank now thought of his promise to be home early, and taking advantage of a moment when the rest were clustering around the table where the liquor was, he asked Big Lize to go out with him. She at first refused, but he hinted at his knowledge of the girl, and she immediately hurried out with him.

CHAPTER VI.

IN a room of that same mysterious house, which we have already described—the one where Albert Shirley met poor Mary Sheffield, and where we have before seen Mrs. Carlton—sat the last named lady.

Her beautiful face was flushed with excitement. Her eyes were red—she had evidently been weeping—and her form seemed to quiver with agitation. She started at every sound which she heard, and seemed to be anxiously awaiting the appearance of some one.

Suddenly a step was heard ascending the stairs—the door flew open, and Cooly entered.

'Charles, dear Charles!' she cried, as she sprang into his arms—'I'm so glad to see you—I've had a terrible scene with my husband!'

'Yes, so your note told me—but does he know of our intimacy?'

'Yes, he told me all, and named you,—I denied it, but I know he has found it out!'

'The devil he has! what is to be done?' cried Cooly, turning pale.

'We must fly, dear Charles!' said the lady, not noticing his pallor.

‘Fly ! where to, or how ? I have no means of leaving !’

‘I am prepared for that. Here are two thousand dollars, which I took from a drawer in my bureau, where he left it !’ replied the ready-witted and fond woman. ‘We can leave the country with that, or go out west !’

Cooly did not reply. Things had evidently taken a turn which he did not like.

‘Don’t you think it’ll all blow over, if we separate for a while, Hannah ?’ asked he.

‘Blow over !’ exclaimed she, in surprise—‘you know little of Henry Carlton if you dream of such a thing ! He never will forgive you or me—and your life alone will satisfy him.’

‘But, Hannah, you know I go prepared ; besides this, he would not dare to attack me here, in the crowded city, where policemen are so thick.’

‘*Dare*—Charles ? He dare do anything ! You don’t know him as I do. Will you go with me or not !’

‘Why, Hannah, really —— I ——’

‘Answer me, sir, at once ! Let it be yes or no !’ cried Mrs. C. sternly.

‘Why, Hannah, my business —— !’

‘Charles Cooly, don’t try to form an excuse. Your business is worth nothing, and you’re in debt now. I offer you two thousand dollars, to leave all and go with me to some place where we are not known. Here, take the money !’ and she handed him a pocket-book.

‘But, Hannah, what is the use ? I should be called a coward by all my friends—I should have to leave—— !’

‘*Leave* ? Do you talk of leaving anything ?’ cried the lady in a bitter tone. ‘Do you leave two children whom you love as you do your own soul—do you leave every luxury which heart can desire, as I do ? Stop, Charles Cooly, don’t speak ! I’ve something to say, now, and *I will not* be interrupted till I have said it !’

‘You met me, and won me away from a fond and trusting husband—you made me love you, as *I*, only I can love ! You have brought me into that fearful shadow from which I can never escape, for when a woman’s fair fame is once lost, it can never be regained. Our intimacy is known, my reputation is blasted for ever, by and for you. I have given up honour, wealth, children—all—all for you, and now *dare* you stand there and say you will not fly with me, at least beyond the persecutions of my husband ?’

Cooly turned pale as death while he listened to her eloquent and bitter gush of language, and yet he thought that he never before had seen her look so beautiful as she did then, with her eyes flashing, her face flushed, and her form swelling in every muscle.

'Why do you not answer—will you go with me?' she continued.

'Give me a little time to think of it, Hannah,' said he.

'I would not thus have answered you!' she said scornfully.

'No, Charles, had I been in your place, and were you in mine, we would even now, be speeding to some distant spot, where we could be happy.'

'But, Hannah, this has come upon me unexpectedly, and I was unprepared for it.'

'Unprepared? Why, Charles, how often I have warned you that I had a watchful and dangerous husband! You ought to have been ready for this, as I was—but when will you give me your answer?'

'In a day or two,' replied Cooly.

'In a day or two!' Why, Charles—a day or two hence you ought to find us hundreds of miles from here. No,—you must answer within two hours—and mark me, if you desert me now, I will *hate* you with all the fervour with which I have loved you. *Beware!*

The warm-blooded and impetuous woman turned and left the room.

'Well, this is a devil of a scrape!' muttered Cooly, as he turned towards the door.

'Yes!' said a deep voice close by his side, and he turned red and white alternately, and trembled in every joint as he felt a hand laid heavily upon his shoulder.

The speaker was Sam Selden, who, hidden by the curtains of the heavy mahogany bedstead, had been a witness to this interview, unknown to both parties.

Cooly quickly put his hand inside of his vest, as if to grasp a concealed weapon.

'Pshaw! keep cool! Don't go to drawing anything on me!' said the gambler, fixing his dark eyes upon the pallid face of Cooly, 'be sensible and let us arrange this little matter!'

'What have you got to do with it?' asked Cooly, a little more assured, when he saw no sign of attack made by Selden.

'A good deal!' replied the gambler. 'I am Harry Carlton's bosom friend—he loves his wife yet, unworthy as she is. I have heard her proposal—saw her give you the two thousand dollars. Now all I have to say is this,—quit her, and leave the city without her, and you may keep the money!'

'I will quit her, but not the city—and as to the money, you may take it back to Carlton,' replied Cooly.

'You're a fool,' said Selden impatiently—'if you stay here, Harry Carlton'll kill you.'

'No, he wont—and all I'll do is to give up the woman,' said Cooly.

'Then you will *not* leave the place!'

'No,—there is the money—take it to Carlton, and tell him his wife is as much to blame as I am.'

'Will you write to her, and let me take the note, and say in it that you have done with her for ever?'

'Yes, and glad to get rid of her so easy. She has a devil of a temper, and begins to be troublesome,' replied Cooly.

The gambler rang the bell. In a moment the lady of the house came to the door.

'Wine, gentlemen?' she asked, in a tone and with a manner that did not evince any surprise at the appearance of Selden, who she knew was in the house, but had supposed to be in another room.

'No,' replied Selden, with his usual politeness, 'but writing materials, if you please, Madame!'

In a few moments they were brought, and Cooly wrote a note, which was dictated by Selden.

'Now, all I have to say is, that you'd better keep clear of Carlton, and let *her* alone for the future!' said Selden, as he pocketed the note, and also the money which Cooly had returned.

Cooley left the room without a reply. Selden smiled when he was gone.

'So far, so well!' he muttered. 'I wonder how she'll like this note,' and he read over the letter of Cooly. 'I reckon she'll wish she hadn't crossed Sam Selden's wishes.'

Then wrapping his handsome Spanish cloak around him, the gambler left the room.

CHAPTER VII.

ONE hour after the last scene, Mr. and Mrs. Carlton were alone in the neat little parlour, above the gambling hell, which overlooked the graveyard.

He was paler than usual, and much agitated, while she was as calm and composed as if her bosom never had harboured a thought other than a pure and faithful wife should think.

'I am sorry you are so jealous, Henry,!' said she, in her usual sweet and musical tone. 'Some one has been telling tales of me—to set you against me.'

The husband did not reply, but paced up and down the room angrily. A moment after a knock was heard at the door.

'Who's there?' asked Carlton, sternly.

'Selden!'

'Ah, come in Sam!' cried Carlton, recognising his friend's voice.

The handsome gambler entered, and as he did so, Mrs. C. started to retire into the bed-room beyond.

'Stay a moment, if you please, madam!' cried Selden, 'I have a note here, which I was requested to deliver to you!'

The lady returned, and taking the note from his hand glanced at the superscription. She trembled as she did so, and while the blood rushed into her face, she cried:

'Where did you get this, sir?'

'The writer gave it to me a short time since!' he replied. 'I met him at a house in — street, where he told me he had just parted with a lady!'

'Oh God! can he be such a villain!' she gasped, as she sank back into a seat.

'Read the note, madam, it may require an answer!' said Carlton, who, from a single look given by Selden, seemed to comprehend the case.

'Thank you, sir, for reminding me of it—it may!' said she, in a sarcastic tone, recovering her calmness by a strong effort, and rising from her seat.

There was not a tremor in her hand as she unfolded the note, not a quiver of her lip, as she read every word of its contents. Yet while she read it, the blood forsook her face, her lips became pale and bloodless.

Twice did she read each word in that note. Then slowly she tore it up, and when it was in scraps she threw them on the floor, and placed her small foot upon them.

'Have you seen the contents of that note?' she asked of Selden.

'He wrote it in my presence, and bade me bring to your husband these two thousand dollars!' replied the gambler, handing Carlton the money.

'Where did this money come from, Sam?' asked Carlton.

'He need not tell you—I will!' cried the pale wife; 'I took it from the bureau, and gave it to a false coward, to pay his expenses and mine to some distant land!'

'You gave it to Charles Cooly?'

'I did; and the wretch has now spurned it and me from him! may God Almighty curse him!'

'Stop, Hannah, stop!' said Carlton, with mock gentleness; 'you forget that he is your lover!'

'Lover? oh God! if the burning hate that I feel for him could rest for one moment on his heart, it would shrivel it like fire! Henry Carlton, if you are a man, if you ever loved me, go and kill him!'

'And get myself hung, Hannah? no, no, I can't oblige you in that; and, besides, what harm has he done me?'

'Only seduced your wife, sir! only made a vile adulteress of the mother of your children—that is all!' cried the maddened woman.

'Why, Hannah, you surprise me! did you not, a short time

since, vow by all that was good on earth and holy in heaven, that you were pure, and true to me ?

‘Yes, and I perjured myself for him—for the coward, who has so basely deserted her whom he has ruined !’

‘And so you think he deserves punishment ?’ continued the husband.

‘Yes, death !’ hoarsely cried the wife.

‘Would you kill him ?’

‘I—I ? oh God ! I could not !’ murmured she.

‘And yet he would do more than kill you !’

‘Yes, yes ! Henry Carlton, I have done wrong, but hear me ; you have been at fault. I loved you devotedly once, but you neglected me. Night after night you stood before your gaming table ; day after day you spent with the companions whom you have gathered around you. This *thing*, I will not call him man, met me in a sad and unguarded moment, when you were away. He saw that I was sad and lonely, and he *pitied* me. That *pity* has been my ruin. Had not your neglect made me an object of pity, I would still have been as true to you as the sun is to its course !’

The gambler listened to her words, and his voice trembled as he turned to Selden and said :

‘Sam, leave us a little while.’

After the door was closed, Carlton turned to his wife, and she noticed that his eyes were moist.

‘Hannah,’ said he, ‘you have spoken truly. Much of this has been my fault. I love you yet, and I will forgive you when—when that wretch is dead !’

‘I do not ask forgiveness,’ she replied. ‘I have wronged myself and my children as much as I have injured you. But as for *him*—he must not live to glory in my shame !’

‘He shall not,’ replied the gambler slowly, but firmly. Then he added :

‘Hannah, I have a favour to ask of you !’

‘Speak on—I am your slave henceforth, Henry !’

‘No, Hannah, do not speak so !’ replied he kindly. ‘I will bury the past. We will both do better in future !’

Tears came from his eyes as he spoke. How strange it was that one so hardened in deep and calculating villany as he, could weep : could be possessed of some of those softer and more tender feelings of human nature, placed in his bosom perchance to contrast with his other attributes, as we sometimes see the violet and rose peep out on a barren mountain side, in the very shadow of the grim black rocks.

But he brushed these away and said :

‘I want you to write a note, or send a message to Cooly, Hannah.’

‘What, Henry’

'It will be the last you need ever send, Hannah; he *dies* to-morrow night.'

The woman looked up in her husband's eyes, and she knew he meant what he said.

'What message shall I send?' she asked.

'Tell him that you must have a few minutes conversation to-morrow evening. Ask him to meet you and walk with you a little way!'

'I will send the word,' she replied. 'Retire into the bedroom, and I will ring the bell for Eliza.'

Carlton obeyed, and Mrs. C. rang a little bell which lay upon her table. In a moment the mulatto girl came in.

'Eliza,' said the lady, 'I want you to go and see Mr. Cooly for me.'

'Yes, Mistress!'

'I want you to tell him I have received his note, and that it is all right, but I *must* see him once more. Tell him I ask it for the *last* time, and that he must take a short walk with me to-morrow night!'

'Yes, Mistress!'

'And be careful—let no one hear you deliver the message!'

The servant disappeared on her errand, and Carlton again came forward.

'You have done right, Hannah. I will now make my arrangements.'

'To punish him?' she asked with a shudder.

'Yes,' he replied, 'I shall not rest till it is done. Remember, Hannah, no feeling for him. He has deserted and spurned you away from him.'

'It is true,' she murmured bitterly—'I will not pity him—but must I aid in his death?'

'Yes, you must get him into a good place. You must get him off alone, for the coward keeps a crowd around him all the time, and there is no other way of getting him alone!'

'Do as you will—I am your slave now,' said she sadly. He *deserves* death.'

'He shall have it, Hannah—yet we must act very cautiously to avoid the law.'

'Will you kill him?' she asked.

'No.'

'Then it is Sam Selden,' she said.

'No, both of us might be suspected. I have chosen one on whom suspicion cannot rest. Even you will not know by whom the deed is done. I have all my plan laid, and it cannot fail!'

'It ought not—yet—'

'Yet, what? Why this trembling and agitation, Hannah? Look at the paper which lies at your feet—did his hand tremble when he wrote that?'

'No, nor shall mine again!' replied Mrs. C. 'But leave me for a while, Henry; I will grow calm—desperately calm!'

'I will, but first, Hannah, take this as a token of reconciliation.'

Mrs. C. shuddered as she felt the pressure of his lips. He had evidently ceased to be an object of either love or respect with her—for when a woman's heart is once alined, it can never return to its allegiance and former fondness. Like a flower with its stem half-broken off, it may linger on a little while with the appearance of freshness, but it never can regain its original strength and beauty.

CHAPTER VIII.

MR. SHIRLEY, the seducer of the unhappy Mary Sheffield, was seated in his elegantly furnished sitting-room, listening to music from the lips of his daughter, a beautiful young girl, who accompanied herself with rare taste on a piano.

Mr. Shirley had finished his day's business, dined comfortably, and now sat there in his dressing-gown and slippers, as carelessly as if his miserable victim, poor Mary, had never existed. Had he forgotten her? It would appear so, if one might judge from his smiling face and self-satisfied look.

'That last song was very well sung, child!' he said, as his daughter arose from her piano, and coming to his side, pressed her fair pure lips to his high brow.

'I think our Constance is improving in her music!' said Mrs. Shirley, a pale care-worn looking lady, who seemed to be older than he.

'Yes, and in beauty too!' said the proud father.

'Beauty is a dangerous possession!' said the mother sadly. 'It has been the ruin of many a poor girl!'

A sudden cloud seemed to cross the brow of Mr Shirley, but he shook it off, and said gently:

'You're always moralizing, my dear. If our daughter does not benefit by your teachings, it will be her own fault.'

The reply of Mrs. Shirley was cut short by the entrance of a servant, who brought in a note.

'This was just left, sir,' said the servant, 'by a man who said it must be delivered in haste.'

Mr. Shirley opened it, and turned as pale as death when he read it.

'What is the matter, dear father?' cried his daughter, noticing his agitation.

'Albert, you have bad news there!' cried his wife.

'No, no, only some perplexing business,' he replied.

'Can you not tell me what it is?' asked the lady sadly; 'if

you have any trouble or perplexity, who should share it but your wife ?

‘It is nothing, Cordelia,’ he replied—‘only a friend of mine is in trouble—I must go down and see him !’

‘You will not be gone long, dear Father !’ said the daughter, ‘we shall be very lonesome till you return.’

‘I’ll soon be home, my pet !’ said Mr. Shirley, kissing her, and then he hurried to change his dress, preparatory to going out. In a few moments he had gone forth, and he was hurrying as fast as he could to obey a summons which was contained in the note which he had just received—a summons which he *dared* not disobey.

And what was that summons ? Let the note itself say, Mr. Shirley, in his haste and agitation, had dropped it upon the floor when he went out, instead of thrusting it in a side pocket as he thought he had.

Constance picked it up in a moment after he had left, and as it was open, noticed the writing.

‘In what a beautiful hand it is written, mother,’ she said, ‘it must be from a lady !’

The mother glanced at the note carelessly, but the first four or five words attracted her attention, and she could not take her eyes from it. She turned pale, but she read on.

The note was as follows :

‘My dear Mr Shirley,

‘Mary Sheffield is very low, and I am afraid she will not live the night through. The *operation* is over, but it has been a fearful time. She is perfectly sensible, and insists upon seeing you immediately. She bids me say to you, that she will not live to see the sun rise, and I fear she speaks but too truly. You had better come, for if she dies, I wish to consult you upon the disposition of the body. It is a bad case, and if the police were to get hold of it, both you and I would be in a bad scrape. We cannot get over this as easy as we did with Jane, the bindery girl. Bring some money with you.

‘In haste, truly yours,

‘Caroline L. Sitstill,

‘No. — Greenwich St.’

Mrs. Shirley read every word, and then gazed upon that note for a long, long minute, ere she spoke.

Then she fell upon her knees, and with her clasped hands pressed to her brow, murmured :

‘Oh God ! is it so ! was it for this I have been so neglected ! and must my poor daughter suffer for his wickedness !’

She dropped the note to the floor, and her daughter, who was terror-stricken by her mother’s strange conduct, snatched it up, and cried :

‘What is the matter, dear mother ? What is there so terri

ble in this note? It frightened father, and now you are in tears and agony! Tell me, mother, tell me!

'Nothing, dear Constance, nothing!' replied her mother, trying to calm herself. 'Go and tell the coachman to put the horses to the carriage. I am going out.'

'You'll let me go with you, mother?'

'No, child, I cannot. I must go alone!'

'Mother, there is something very strange in all this! Please let me read that note!'

'No, Constance, you must not. I will take care of it!' replied the mother, taking it, and putting it in her bosom. 'Now do go and call the carriage.'

The young girl obeyed, but tears were glistening in her eyes as she went. There was a mystery in all this which she could not understand.

The carriage was called, and in a very short time Mrs. Shirley was driving to the same place where her husband had gone. He, having stepped into the first hack he met, had already reached the house where his suffering victim was dying.

He was met by Mrs. Sitstill at the door.

'Is she alive?' he asked, as he entered.

'Yes, but very low. Walk up!' replied the woman, leading the way into a second story back room, where, upon a splendid couch lay a pale, ghastly looking creature, whom Shirley recognised as her who had been so beautiful, poor Mary Sheffield. Her features were now distorted with pain, her eyes were sunken, and the colour had fled from her lips and cheeks.

'So, you have come, Albert!' she whispered huskily; 'I wanted to see you before I died!'

'You will not die, Mary,' he replied, in a choked tone; 'the worst is over now!'

'No, Albert—the worst is *not* over! For me and for you the worst is yet to come! I shall die in a few hours, but even then the worst is not over. Albert Shirley,—there is a *hell* for both of us! For you, there may yet be joy on earth—you may have time given you for repentance—but you will *never* forget me!'

Shirley trembled and quivered as if his heart already felt the torments of hell.

'Come close to me, Albert!' said the dying girl,—'come close to me, and take my hand. I want to talk to you. I have *loved* you, Albert, and I love you yet, though you have deceived, ruined, *murdered* me, soul and body!'

The man groaned, but did not speak—he felt even then a deeper agony than she.

'I have yet one favour to ask, before I die,' she continued, 'it is, that you'll take care of my poor mother, and aid her. Do not leave her to the cold charity of the alms-house, or in

her helpless old age permit her to be a wandering beggar in the streets. If it had not been for you, Albert, I should yet be the happy girl I was, and be living to support and take care of her !'

Her words cut him to the very soul—for they were true. He could not gainsay a single one of them.

'I will take care of her !' he replied.

'Then, Albert, I will forgive you all the wrong you have done me. But do not let her or the world know the cause of my death—bury me secretly, and do not let my name be blasted with the shadow of this shame !'

'You will not die, Mary,—do cheer up,—the worst is over !' said he, trying to cheer her up even against his own fears, for he felt that she was indeed dying.

'No,—I feel that death is laying his cold hand upon me !' she murmured, 'but I do not wish to live—yet I am not fit to die !'

Suddenly a noise was heard at the door, the sound of footsteps on the staircase was heard, and Shirley shook in every limb, for he recognised the voice of his wife. The servant who had admitted her, supposing her to be a patient who needed the services of Madame S., now found out the error too late, and was trying to persuade her that Mr. Shirley was not there. Madame S. hurried to the door, but as she opened it, the wife saw her husband, and calling his name, rushed up the stairs.

'Let her come !' said Mr. Shirley mournfully,—I deserve it all.'

'Where is this Mary Sheffield—where is the wanton who has seduced a husband from his home?' she shrieked, as she rushed into the room.

But she hushed and stood aghast, as she looked upon the pallid face of the dying girl.

'Is that your wife, Albert?' murmured Mary, looking at Mrs. S.

'The unhappy man groaned his brief reply.

'Come near me, lady—I can do you no harm—I am dying !' she murmured.

Mrs. Shirley shuddered, but advanced and took the hand of the dying girl.

'I little thought, lady, that *he* was married, when I gave *him* my love !' she said faintly. 'You will forgive me—he told me that he was alone, that no one had a right to his love.'

The wife looked at her guilty husband.

'It is too true—too true !' he murmured—'Oh, may God forgive me !'

'Amen, even as I do !' feebly added Mary ; and then she turned her eyes upon the already tearful face of Mrs. Shirley, and said :

'Forgive me, lady, I wronged you without knowing it!'

'I do, I do!' cried the lady, bursting into tears. 'Oh, Albert, what have you done.'

'Damned myself eternally!' groaned the unhappy man.

'Oh, do not say so. Live to do her justice, and to repent,' moaned Mary, and then gasping for breath, she added:

'Albert, take care of—— my mother!'

One more gasp, and one attempt to speak—and her breath passed away, while yet the hand of her seducer's wife was clasped in her own. Her last look was upon him, her last word was the name of her poor mother.

And this was the last of poor Mary Sheffield—she who was known as the 'Pretty Cigar Girl!'

She had been dead scarcely a moment, when Madame Sitstill, in a business like way, as if she was used to such work, proceeded to close her eyes. Then obeying a sign from Shirley, she left him and his wife alone in the room.

'Oh, Albert, this is dreadful!' murmured the wife. 'She is dead.'

'Yes, and I have murdered her!' groaned the conscience-stricken husband. 'Cordelia, I have sinned deeply—I have wronged you—but for your daughter's sake, forgive me.'

'For her sake, I will, Albert, if you can forgive yourself—but I can never banish the memory of this night! Yet we will never speak of it again. Arrange for this poor girl's burial, and let us go home, our carriage is at the door.'

The merchant called Madame Sitstill in, and told her that whatever draft she made for burial expenses, should be paid on presentation to him.

'We cannot manage this affair in the usual way,' said Madame S. 'The girl is so well known that her death will be inquired into—but I have a plan I think will do. Do you keep quiet whatever you may hear. I will attend to all, and on to-morrow I shall expect to have my draft for one thousand dollars cashed.'

'It shall be done?' said Mr. Shirley; then turning to his wife, he asked:

'How came you to know of this, and how did you trace me here?'

She took the letter which he had dropped, from her bosom, and handed it to him.

'I was careless, but, Cordelia, it is for the best. I could not have borne this terrible secret alone—it would have killed me.'

They turned and took a last look at poor Mary as she lay there so white and cold. Her face was calm when she died.

The distortion had passed away, and a smile seemed to have frozen there. Her hands were crossed upon her breast, and much of her remarkable beauty seemed left to her.

They took one last look, then turned away, and soon their carriage rattled from before the door of that terrible house.

Albert Shirley, or the *reality* of our shadow, is yet living; but the memory of that fearful night will never leave him. It haunts his dreams at night; it burdens his soul by day. Poor Mary! She is indeed avenged.

CHAPTER IX.

It was the morning after Mrs. Abingdon's visit to Genlis. Mrs. A. and her husband were seated at their breakfast table. Both of them looked pale and care-worn.

'Annie, said Mrs. A., 'you have some secret in your bosom, which you will not confide to me.'

'A secret, Edward,' she replied, in a tone of surprise.

'Yes, dear Annie, one that disturbs you even in your dreams. It is wronging me not to confide in me.'

'I *do* confide in you, Edward.'

'In *all* things, Annie? Is there *nothing* that you hide from me?'

The young wife coloured up. She could not tell a lie, and yet she had sworn to Genlis not to reveal her visits.

'Speak, Annie,' said her husband, impatiently. 'There is something strange in this conduct.'

'What! you are not jealous of me, Edward?'

'No, Annie; God forbid that I should be; I would not be thus calm if I were, but I know that you have something that troubles you, which you are studiously concealing from me!'

'How do you know it, Edward?'

'You have unconsciously informed me of it. I passed a sleepless night, and all the night you were murmuring about some one whom you called *Geneis*!'

The young wife started at this name.

'Who is he?' asked the husband.

'Edward, I cannot tell you!' she replied.

'Cannot tell me, Annie? you certainly wish to quarrel with me. Your conduct is unaccountable!'

'I acknowledge it, Edward; yet if you will be angry with me, I cannot help it!'

'You acknowledge that you have a secret which you are keeping from me!'

'Yes, one which I dare not reveal; but it does not concern your honour as a husband, or my duty as a wife.'

'Annie, this must be explained!' said Mr. A., sternly. 'Who is this Genlis—what is he?'

'I cannot tell you, Edward.'

'Annie, you *must*, I have never before assumed this tone, but now you force me to do so. I demand this secret.'

'Edward, I have *sworn* not to reveal it.'

'To whom, and for what?'

'To Genlis, and to recover our poor lost boy.'

'Yes, you murmured of him in your sleep, and spoke of a steamboat and a schoolmaster.'

'I was dreaming of the pictures.'

'What pictures, Annie? You will drive me mad with anxiety. Once more I *demand* this secret of you.'

'Edward, I cannot reveal it!' said the wife, in a firm, sad tone.

'Very well, *Mrs. Abingdon*! I'll see if I cannot find it out in some way. I'll find out this Genlis, if he be in this city, and I'll force the secret from him, even if I have to cut it out of his heart!' cried the husband, angrily.

Mrs. A. burst into tears, but did not answer, while her husband arose from the table, and paced up and down the floor with a heavy, irregular step.

'Fine times!' he continued; 'very fine times, when my wife can have *secrets* involving the names of other men, and keep them from me.'

'Edward,' said his wife, as she heard this remark, 'you will be sorry for this base and unfounded insinuation.'

'And you madam, ought already to be sorry for having sworn to another man to keep a secret from your husband.'

'Oh, Edward, you wrong me! God in heaven knows that you do.'

'*Perhaps* so, madam. But I've a few questions to ask you. Have I not always been a fond and faithful husband to you?'

'You have, Edward!'

'Has there been a desire of your's ever mentioned which I have not complied with?'

'No, Edward, no! I have no complaint to make.'

'Have you ever known me to withhold from you a single secret, even to the minutest item of my daily business?'

'No!' sobbed the wife.

'That is all; I wished to know if I had fulfilled my duty to you as a fond and true husband.'

'You have, Edward; but do not ask of me this secret!'

'I shall not, madam!' replied the husband, in a slow, calm tone, which betokened his mind to be verging on desperation.

'I am about to leave you—I will trouble you no more. You may send for Mr. Genlis to help you keep your secret.'

As he said this, he took his hat from the stand, and turned towards the door.

In a moment, his sobbing wife was on her knees before him, clinging to his form.

'Oh! Edward, for the love of heaven do not treat me so!'

I do not deserve this—indeed I do not !’ she sobbed in broken accents, while she clasped his hands and deluged them with tears.

The husband tried to be sternly calm. He turned away his head, but his lips quivered, and moisture gathered in his eyes.

‘Oh ! Edward, for the love you bear our poor lost boy, do not leave me in anger ! Oh, have mercy upon me ! I have *not* wronged you,’ cried the unhappy wife.

‘The secret,’ said he in a low, husky tone, for he was almost choked with emotion.

‘Oh, do not go from me—I will tell you all,’ she sobbed.

‘Rise—do not kneel !’ said he, and as he bent down to raise her up, she felt hot tears gush from his eyes upon her face.

‘Oh ! God, Edward, would you have left me ?’

‘Annie, I was crazed with suspicion. What is this secret ?’

‘Sit down, and be calm—I will tell you all. God forgive me for breaking my oath.’

The young wife now revealed to her husband all that had happened, from her first visit to the Indian woman, to the last night’s scene.

‘Oh, forgive me, Annie, how much I wronged you ! You are an angel !’ cried the husband, when he had heard all, and with passionate fondness he kissed her pouting lips.

‘I thought you would be sorry, for having been so foolish as to be jealous of me,’ she replied, with a smile ; ‘but now that I have told you all, Edward, what is to be done ? Shall we give this man ten thousand dollars ?’

‘It is a very large sum, Annie, and he has evidently stolen the child. I do not believe in his magic. That is all humbug.’

‘Oh ! Edward, you would not say so, if you had seen all that I have seen !’

‘I mean to see it, and him too, Annie. I’ll *force* him to restore the child. He has misled you by his ideas of magic, and you have already given him a thousand dollars !’

‘Yes, Edward ! but I thought I could regain our poor Willie by it !’

‘True, Annie, and I do not blame you. You were deluded—but you did one sensible thing.’

‘What was that, Edward ?’

‘Cutting off the cord from the tassel in the hackney-coach. It may lead to the detection of the whole villany. Why did you do it ?’

‘I hardly remember. I believe a thought came into my head, that I might wish to find that coach again.’

You noticed the colour of the horses ?’

‘Yes, one was white, the other brown or black.’

Might there not have been a covering on one or the other ?’

‘No, I think not—and the driver was an Irishman !’

‘That is no clue. Nearly all the hack-drivers in town are Irish, and a saucy, cheating, good-for-nothing set of scoundrels they are too. If you were to rake the dominions of his sulphuric majesty with a fine-toothed comb, you couldn’t find a more unprincipled, rascally set! Have you the cord which you cut off?’

‘I have,’ replied the wife, going to her work-basket, and producing it from a needle-book, where she had carefully placed it.

‘I shall take it to my good friend, Justice M——, and tell him of these facts, and I think, between us, we will soon get on the trace of the poor boy,’ said the husband. ‘If we once find the hack-driver, we can force him to take us to the house of this Genlis, and we’ll soon see, then, what his magic is made of!’

‘You will not be jealous with me again, Edward?’ asked the young wife, as she looked up fondly in his face.

‘No—my own dear—*dear* Annie! this has been our first quarrel—it shall be our last! But you will own that things looked a little suspicious?’ replied he, as he tenderly kissed the high fair brow, from which he pushed aside the clustering curls.

‘Yes, but I did not know that I talked in my sleep, Edward!’

‘Oh! that is an old habit of yours. Often and often have I awakened in the night, and found you clasping me to your bosom, and calling me by every fond name that you could think of, and still you were sound asleep!’

‘It is a second nature with me, dearest!’ said the blushing wife, ‘one that will not offend you, I hope!’

‘*Offend* me! My own sweet Annie—it is my greatest joy. If our poor boy was only restored to our arms, I should be perfectly happy. I am now happier than I was, for I have feared that Willie was dead. Now I am satisfied that he is living, and has only been stolen from us to extort money.’

The husband now went forth to find his friend, the Police Justice, so as to take measures for tracing the child. He first thought of letting Mrs. A. make Genlis another visit, and of following the carriage that conveyed her; but fearing that Genlis had spies, who would see that the carriage was followed, and alter its destination, he determined upon first quietly finding the carriage and driver, if possible, unknown to Genlis, whose character he had very accurately conjectured.

CHAPTER X.

'Do you say you know where my poor cousin is?' asked Lize of Frank Hennock, as soon as they had got outside of Jack Circle's crib.

'I shouldn't wonder if I did!' said Frank knowingly. 'She's rather slight—about fifteen or sixteen years old, would be pretty if she wasn't so thin—has blue eyes, light curling hair, and wears a black dress.'

'Yes—yes, you have seen her, where is she!' cried Lize, eagerly.

'I've some conditions to arrange before I can afford to tell you,' replied the young man.

'Name them, and be quick!' cried Lize.

'Well, the first one is—the money, you said you'd give a hundred dollars.'

'So I will.'

'Well, I don't doubt your honour, but as Paul Clifford used to say, I'd like to see the colour of your money, Lize.'

'I hav'n't so much with me, Frank,' said the woman, 'but if you must have it—I can get it in five minutes. Charley Cooper or old Jack 'll let me have the brads in a minute.'

'I don't care about the money till I show you the girl,' said Frank, 'and that can't be to-night.'

'Why not? Look here, younker, you know me, and I'm not to be fooled with!' cried the woman angrily.

'I'm not trying to fool with you, Lize!' said he, shrinking back from before her clenched and threatening hand.

'Then tell me where the girl is.'

'If I do, you'll not try to see her to-night?'

'I don't know about that. Is she safe?' asked Lize.

'Yes,' replied the thief, 'and in good quarters.'

'Then why can't you tell me where she is?'

'I will, if you'll promise me the money when you see her, and promise not to let them that you'll find with her know that you ever saw me before.'

'Well, tell me—I'll promise,' cried the woman eagerly.

'Then, she's at my master's.'

'What, the old cove that they were just talking about, in there?'

'Yes—nobody else.'

'How did she come there?'

'Why, he picked her up fainting in the street and took her in.'

'God bless him—but, Frank, why can't I see her to-night?'

'Because I don't think it would be right. When you do

come, you mustn't look as if you knew me, and mind, you mustn't break the old bond and betray the gang.'

'No—no, of course not. But I'd like to see the poor gal. Didn't she look sick, and frightened?'

'Yes—like Ophelia on the banks of——'

'Oh, curse your poetry, younker; talk sense to me. How can I manage to see her? How can I explain my finding out she was there?'

'Tell 'em a watchman told you such a girl went in there—and ask after her name.'

'Well, enough said, I'll do it—and if this is indeed my cousin, I'll give you the hundred to-morrow. I shall be there early—by the way I've forgotten to ask the street and number.'

Frank gave her this information, and then hurried away.

It was getting late and Lize determined to go home. She had nearly reached the street where she would turn off to go to her room, when she found herself impeded by a crowd of young men, most of whom seemed to be drunk, for they all were very noisy.

'There's what I call a *high* old g'hal!' said one of the party, as he looked at Lize.

'Don't you know who she is?' cried another—'it's big Lize of Thomas street!'

'Known everywhere—my God, it is time for me to die!' groaned the unhappy woman.

'Then you'd go where you'd be better known than anywhere else!' cried one of the party, with a coarse laugh.

'Get out of my way, and let me pass along quietly!' cried Lize, seeing that some of the party were determined to stop her.

'Don't yer wish we would!' cried one of the coarsest of the crowd, thrusting himself directly before her.

She only replied by raising him clear of the pavement, and dashing him into the gutter, and attempting to pass on. But the whole party took up the cause of their discomfited comrade, and Lize was in danger of very rough treatment, when a smaller party hurried up the street, and a large, square-shouldered young fellow pushed into the crowd, crying:

'Ello! what 're ye about yere anyhow? what's the muss?'

At this moment he saw the fellow whom Lize had thrown into the gutter, rush up and strike her, with a broken brick, on the head.

Mose, for this was none other than he, sprang at the coward, and felling him with a single blow, he shouted;

'Strike a ghal, would ye?'

Then shouting to his party to come on, he dashed into the whole crowd that had interrupted poor Lize, and in less than

a minute all of them who had not run for it, lay stretched upon the pavement.

He then helped Lize up. She had been stunned by the blow which she had received, but was not much injured.

'Make tracks, old ghal !' said Mose, as soon as she was on her feet, 'the watch 'll be along here afore soon—they know I'm out on a spree, myself! They wouldn't go for to come for to try to take me up ; but they'd jug you if they could !'

'Yes, they're always down on us poor women !' said Lize—'they're afeard to take men up, but the women must suffer !'

She then started away, as Mose had advised, and soon turned down the street which led to her room. Just as she turned the corner, a person who had been following her at a distance, stepped up to her side and spoke :

'I didn't know but you'd like comp'ny hum to-night—I rayther guessed you mought be lonesome !' said the man, who turned out to be the down-east b'hoy, whom Mose called the 'Postle.

'You may turn around and go back then,' said Lize scornfully, as she looked at the scrimped pattern of a man who stood before her.

'Well, that's short and sweet, and kinder like givin' a feller the mitten !' grumbled the 'Postle.

Lize paid no attention to his remark, but passed on, while the 'Postle turned around to rejoin his company, muttering as he went :

'There's some tall gals, here in York, sure, but I don't like their manners ! They don't understand courtin' like our folks to hum !'

CHAPTER XI.

'WELL, Sir, what do you want of me?' asked Meadows, of Carlton, in a gloomy tone, when he followed the latter, after separating from Whitmore and Livingston.

'Sit down and take a glass of wine, and I'll tell you !' replied Carlton, shutting the door of the room, and pointing to a table upon which wine and glasses had already been placed.

'I have drunk enough !' replied Meadows, as he seated himself.

'Well, I'm confounded dry !' said the other, pouring out some wine and drinking it. He then asked :

'Do you know how Mr S—— stands with his Bank—— has he much cash deposited ?'

'Yes,' replied Meadows, 'he is preparing to make his spring remittances to Europe !'

'How large a cheque have you ever known him to draw at once?' continued the gambler.

'Fifty thousand dollars for a single payment!' replied Meadows.

'Then forty thousand now would be safe, eh?'

'What do you mean—a *forgery*?'

'There's no use in calling it by that name!' replied the gambler. '*Manslaughter*, or *homicide*, always sounds more genteel than the coarse and vulgar term, *Murder*! By the way, Charley, how would you like to kill a man?'

'What, Sir! What do you mean?' asked the clerk in an indignant tone.

'Oh, I only asked for information!' replied the gambler carelessly. 'But about this other business—this cheque, I must trouble you to do that up for me!'

'What, to add forgery to my crimes? Carlton, for God's sake do not drive me deeper into the hellish pit!' groaned Meadows.

'You gave me a bond which specified particularly that you were to *obey* me!' said Carlton, in a deliberate tone, taking a second glass of wine. 'You've got your hand in, and you might as well go ahead!'

'Suppose I refuse?'

'Then your little item of *stealing* might be recorded in Court, and an officer request the pleasure of furnishing you with free board at the Tombs!'

'You forget, that no theft can be proved upon me! The money is paid back—and is safe in the vaults of Mr. S——!' replied Meadows, with a triumphant smile. 'I'm not quite so much in your power as you thought, Mr. Carlton!'

'Indeed!' said the gambler. 'Then you mean to have things your own way, eh?'

'Yes—if you try to force me to go on and intend to make me a slave to your will!'

'You will not fulfil your bond, eh?'

'No!'

'Why did you sign it?'

'To get the money back which you had stolen from me at your infernal faro bank!'

'Indeed—that was your reason, eh! But why did you sign the confession of having stolen the precise sum of seventeen thousand eight hundred and fifty dollars?'

'Because I was desperate—you had me in your power *then*!'

'Yes, and I *still* have you in my power,' replied the gambler with a sneer. 'You have kindly furnished me with the means of recovering that money this very night, if I chose—keys are made by this time to fit the vaults, aye, and every door in your employer's store. I think I could make a very

good spec by picking out some of his thousand dollar shawls, some of his hundred dollar handkerchiefs, &c. Our up-town ladies would give a little more than half-price if they were told they were smuggled, eh?

'You could not harm me by robbing him in that way. My accounts are all correct!' replied the clerk.

'No—but I think, after all, that the confession and bond might be copied into the Herald—I think some proof might be found to connect the name of Charles Meadows with robbery. What an item it would make for Bennet. "Stupendous villany"—"confidential clerk"—"weeping mother and distracted sister"—"accomplished and beautiful girl"—and "heartless wretch"—and all that!' said Carlton, with his customary sneer; and then, as he saw the effect which his remarks had upon Meadows, he added:

'I happen to have a still stronger hold upon you. Every bill that I gave you was a counterfeit. They were very good ones though, and such as I knew would not easily be detected—but a note to Mr. S. connecting your name with a counterfeiting gang, might possibly remove the good impression that he has of you, especially when he found so much bad money in hand.'

'Oh God—I am indeed in your power!' moaned the clerk. 'And now my ruin is certain—for the money will be refused when I go to deposit it.'

'Certainly!' replied Carlton—'but you will have things your own way.'

'No—no—do as you wish with me!' groaned Meadows—'I am indeed your slave!'

'Now you talk sense,' replied the gambler, 'and we can proceed to business. First, I wish you to draw a cheque for forty thousand in the name of S—. Have it ready for presentation whenever I say the word, leaving the date vacant. Then make drafts also with his signature on such Southern houses as you can get cashed here without difficulty. In that way we can raise sixty or seventy thousand, and on the night of the day you make this raise, some friends of mine will avail themselves of your kindness and pay a visit to the vaults and store-room of your employer's establishment.'

'My God!—what a deep planning villain you are!' said the clerk, in astonishment.

'Rather apt—but it is my trade!' replied the gambler, drily.

'How much of all this am I to have?' asked Meadows 'you know that I must leave before it is found out.'

'Yes, and if all succeeds, I think twenty-five thousand dollars would do for your share.'

'Less than half!'

'Yes—and you have less than half the trouble. The poor burglars run more risk than you.'

'More risk! Do not I lose all that is worth having—a good name and fair reputation? I tell you plainly—Henry Carlton, if I could recall my first mis-step—the first thought that induced me to take money from my employer to win more with—I would cut off my right hand before I'd pass the portals of a gambling-house; yes, I'd cut my throat, rather than do what I have done!'

'Indeed!' said the gambler, with a sneer. 'You must be fond of committing suicide—you tried it once here, but made a botch of it!'

'Yes, thank God! it would have ruined my family if I had succeeded,' replied the clerk.

'Well now, we'll drop that, and talk of business again,' said Carlton. 'Cheer up and take a glass of wine.'

Meadows took the wine, but he was neither in a mood nor situation to cheer up.

'We must arrange for your escape after the cheque and drafts are presented!' said Carlton; 'I should be as glad to have you safe out of the country then, as you would be yourself!'

'I do not doubt it—if I was taken up I should convict you too!'

'Not all. There will not be the slightest proof of my connexion with you. You can prove that you gambled at my table perhaps, and perhaps you cannot, for men wouldn't like to swear they had seen you play there, for fear the world, the immaculate and suspicious "world," would want to know what they were doing there themselves.'

'Where can I go to—what country is the most safe?' asked Meadows.

'Why, as to safety—I think Greenland or Africa would be the best, for they are the only countries where I have never heard of the police.'

'This is not a subject to joke upon—where can I go and not be followed; and more than that, where can I go and find no accounts of my leaving in the papers? My mother and sister would die of shame if they were to find it out.'

'Cuba. Some of the interior villages of Cuba I think would do. Their government prohibits American papers because they are afraid of our democratic principles.'

'It would be too near!' replied Meadows. 'I should be surely recognised at some time.'

'So you would be, if you went to the North Pole, perhaps. There never was but one place where a Yankee did not find his way, yet!'

'And that ——— ?'

'Was Captain Symmes' Hole, and there's no doubt in my mind, but some of the Yankee passengers on board the Presi-

dent are trying to get there now—that is, if she stuck in an ice-island as the mesmerists say.’

Meadows did not heed Carlton’s attempt to be witty, but again asked :

‘ Why could I not go to Buenos Ayres, or Brazil ?’

‘ You’re too honest to thrive in those countries. An honest Yankee there would be kicked out of society !’

‘ Don’t torment me with your jokes, Mr. Carlton ; they’re untimely, to say the least.’

‘ So they are, my boy, but I wanted to get you in good humour, for I’ve another piece of business in store for you.’

‘ What, more villany ?’

‘ No, not exactly *villany*, but a little piece of *justice* on my own private account, which I’ll give you five thousand for. That’ll swell your purse to thirty thousand, and if you’ll go into the interior of Cuba, change your name and buy a plantation, you’ll do well.’

‘ My mother and sister must find all out, if I change my name.’

‘ So they would, if they found you possessed of so much money, if you didn’t have some good excuse.’

‘ What excuse could I have ?’

‘ Why, tell them you caught old S ——— in smuggling, and that the government found out you were a witness, and that he gave you this money and hired you to leave, rather than to stay, and be forced to appear against him.’

‘ Yes, that would do. But it will require a great deal of management to get off !’

‘ Leave that to me. Now take another glass of wine, and we’ll arrange the other little matter of which I spoke.’

‘ What is it ?’ asked Meadows, declining to take more wine.

‘ As I said before, it’s only a small matter. I have an enemy, a man who has injured me deeply—I want him punished !’

‘ I am no fighter !’ replied Meadows ; ‘ you can surely settle your own quarrels.’

‘ Unfortunately, in this case I cannot, without laying myself too much under suspicion. It is known that I am the man’s sworn and deadly foe—while you do not even know him, and of course would not be suspected.’

‘ But why so much fear of the law ? Surely if a man injures you and you thrash him, the law will do no more than fine you a few dollars.’

‘ That is true ; but, in this case, my man must get more than a thrashing.’

‘ What do you mean ?’

‘ Only that he must get a few inches of steel through his heart, or a bullet through his brain.’

Meadows shrank back in horror from the cold-blooded villain.

‘What!’ he gasped; ‘do you expect me to commit a murder for you?’

‘Certainly, if I wish it done; the bond specified obedience to all my demands.’

‘But not *murder*; oh God! spare me from that.’

‘Sorry I can’t make it convenient to excuse you, but the fact is, you’re the only *friend* I have that I can use!’

‘Where is Selden? He was made for an assassin, you can see it in his eye. You know that he has courage; he has already stabbed his man.’

‘Yes, and he is too well known for me to use him in this case. I choose you, because you are unknown, and no one will suspect you.’

‘Oh God! I cannot do that, Carlton. Anything else, but spare me from that! I would not have strength to strike a blow!’ groaned Meadows.

‘It requires very little strength to pull a trigger,’ replied the gambler, ‘and I shall have everything so prepared in this case, that there will be no danger to you whatever.’

‘Who is the man?’

‘I cannot tell you that; it is enough that you do not know him!’

‘But if I do not know him, how can I do what you wish?’

‘That shall all be arranged. He shall be brought to you, you shall have neither difficulty nor danger to encounter!’

‘I cannot, dare not do it!’ murmured Meadows.

‘You can, and must!’ replied Carlton. ‘I will have no trifling in this matter. You are in my power, and *must* do as I wish! When this is done, and our raise made out of old S——, you shall have no more trouble, but shall be placed on board a vessel bound to Cuba—you, and your mother and sister! I’ll pledge my *honour* for that!’

His *honour*—the honour of a professional blackleg! Let the devil talk of his *religion* after that; or a beggar of his wealth; or a prostitute of her virtue!

Meadows sighed, as he paused to think of the dreadful proposition of Carlton. He was, indeed, in a dilemma. Certain ruin was his, if he dared to persist in a refusal, for the gambler had him in his power; and if he consented, he might safely leave the country with his mother and sister, possessing sufficient fortune to make them comfortable for life in a foreign land. He did not pause to think how easy and natural it would be for the gambler to break his word to him after all the villany had been furnished; he was in the net, and was blind to everything save his own immediate danger.

‘I will leave you to think of this matter until to-morrow!’ said Carlton; ‘I *know* you’ll be secret on the subject!’

‘Yes, yes; but do spare me from the murder!’

‘Pshaw! man, call it homicide—*justifiable* homicide, and it won’t look half so bad to you!’

‘How can it be justifiable?’ asked the clerk.

‘Because this man has done me the deepest wrong on earth!’ replied the gambler, in a deep tone, while his eye flashed with the memory of the wrong. ‘He has seduced the wife of my bosom—the only being on earth that I *love*, except the children she has borne to me! He has torn her heart from me—he has stained her with a black and damning shadow that not even his blood can wash away!’

Meadows shuddered as he looked upon the now flushed face of the gambler, and saw the fearful working of the storm of passion, which he had restrained all this time.

‘I would kill him myself,’ he continued, ‘but I will at any rate be suspected and arrested. I’ll have to prove an alibi! Sam Selden’ll have to do the same! There is but one other that could do it, and I’m afraid to trust *her* hand.’

‘Mine would be a weak one, I fear!’ said Meadows.

‘You love your sister?’ said Carlton.

‘Yes—I do, as few brothers can.’

‘Were she seduced—blasted—ruined, would you have a weak hand if you stood armed before her seducer?’ cried Carlton.

‘No—I would cleave his heart were it guarded with a coat of mail!’ said Meadows.

‘Then strike but one blow for me—and you shall have the power to make your mother and sister happy for ever! Meadows, I have talked harshly to you—have threatened you and all that—but do this one favour for me—I ask it as a favour—and I will be the best friend you ever had. I will give you fifty thousand dollars; yes, for his heart’s blood I’d almost give his weight in gold—you will do it, won’t you?’

Carlton, in his excitement, had forgotten the bond, forgotten that he was the master. His usual pallor had deserted him, and his eyes gleamed like sparks of living fire.

Meadows filled a glass with wine—dashed it down his throat, and in a low husky whisper, asked—!

‘When must it be done?’

‘Soon, *very* soon. I’ll let you know to-morrow.’

‘Give me till then to decide.’

‘No—now—*now*.’ cried the gambler—‘I must have all uncertainty off my mind! I shall go mad, and be fool enough to murder him myself. Speak, will you do it?’

‘My hand would tremble, I could never reach his heart with the steel.’

‘A pistol shall be your weapon.’

'Its report would bring aid to him—I shall be detected.'

'No—I have arranged everything for that in my mind already, and walked over the spot where he must die—and have seen the course which you must take. I had but just come from there when I met you—and had just seen him—the wretch who must die! You need not fear—I pledge you my sacred honour, than for you there is not the slightest danger. You never will be suspected. I'll prepare the weapon myself, and I'll take good care that it shall be loaded to *snap* this time.'

'I'll see you to-morrow!' said Meadows gloomily—again swallowing some wine.

'Well—let it be so, you'll do it for me, Charley!'

'I suppose I *must*! I'm your slave!' replied the clerk.

'No—rather say my FRIEND if you'll do me this favour!' replied Carlton.

After taking some more wine, they separated—Meadows to return to his mother's house—Carlton to repair to his father's table, and meet some of the *respectable* citizens of this great city.

CHAPTER XII.

Poor Angelina! A second day of sickness had dawned upon her, and though she looked far more beautiful than she had on the night before, her very beauty indicated the fearful progress of her disease. Her cheeks were flushed and of a rosy hue; her blue eyes seemed larger and brighter than ever. Yet the blue veins on her throbbing temples were dark and swollen—her pale lips quivered, and every now and then opened with a low moan of suffering, while her frame was convulsed with the racking pain of the fever.

Mr. Precise had not closed his eyes all night. He had given his bed up to Jenny, though the latter had offered to sit up and watch with the invalid. So far as being sleepless, he had not had the advantage of the sick girl. She had not slept—but had lain and tossed with pain, all the night.

'I am so glad it is day once more!' she murmured, as the grey light of early dawn came in through the open shutters of the window.

'Yes—you've had a hard night—poor creature!' said Mr. Precise, kindly—'but never mind, the doctor 'll be here soon, and 'll cure you up.'

'No—no!' sighed the girl, 'you are taking all this trouble for nothing. I feel as if I should not get well!'

'Don't talk that way! you'll soon be well and hearty as a spring lamb!' said the old gentleman, while a tear came up in

either eye. 'Turn over and try to sleep, child—I'll have some gruel made for you, agin the time you wake up!'

'I will try,' murmured the sufferer—'but my eyes ache as if they were coming out. My head seems as if it was all on fire!'

'Poor creetur! I wish I could bear it all for you!' said the old gentleman.

'Oh! God bless you, sir, you are too kind to me!' replied the sufferer.

'No, my child, no indeed! we can never be too kind to the suffering whom we meet. But go to sleep now—that's a good girl. I'll not talk to you any more.'

The old gentleman leaned back in his easy chair as he said this, but he did not keep silent very long, though he said no more, for he almost instantly dropped into a slumber himself, and began to snore very loudly. His snoring, too, was almost like talking. First it would come out with a long, low, swelling murmur, with a gradual rise in the intonation, as if he was asking a question. Then would come a short, quick snort, like a cross single-syllabled answer. Then, again, his nasal member would seem to imagine itself a stage horn, for it would give a very good imitation of that instrument, we mean of the small straight tin horn, used by western stage-drivers.

Angelina lay there and listened to this singular music for some time, until Jenny came into the room. As she did so, Mr. Precise awoke.

'Well, I do declare. Why, I must have gone to sleep,' he muttered, as he rubbed his eyes. 'What time is it, Jenny?'

'Breakfast-time, sir,' replied the girl. 'The muffin-man has been here—and I've got your coffee ready.'

'Make some gruel for this poor girl,—why, my dear, haven't you been to sleep yet?'

'No, sir, I am not sleepy,' murmured the sufferer.

'Well,—it was so strange that I should go to sleep, and then, I had a dream, too!'

'A dream, sir?' repeated Angelina, wondering what he could have dreamed about while he snored so loud.

'Yes, and it was such a strange one. It was about my new plan for the good of the poor. I thought that I was on the farm that I'm going to have laid out for them—and that the houses were all built, and the fields laid out, and the people all at work, and I stood there looking at them and rubbing my hands with joy, when all of a sudden, I heard a loud noise like a gun fired, or a peal of thunder, and everything sank out of my sight. While I stood there, wondering what on earth all this meant, I thought I saw an angel stand before me, dressed all in white, with great white wings, and a face just like yours, my dear, and it looked very mournfully at

me, and shook its head sadly three times. I was just going to speak to it, when it flew away up into the sky,—and then I woke up !

‘Wall,—I never !’ cried Jenny, who, with mouth and eyes wide open, had been listening.

‘Go and make the gruel, Jenny,’ said Mr. Precise, sharply ; then, as he turned and looked at Angelina, he saw that tears were stealing down her cheeks.

‘Do you believe in dreams, my dear ?’ he asked.

‘Yours will come true, sir !’ she replied,—‘I know I shall die very soon.’

‘Oh ! God forbid,’ said the old gentleman fervently—‘it would be too hard for you to die now, when your troubles are all over !’

‘There’s a woman down stairs—a great tall woman, who wants to know if there aint no such girl here as Angelina Lindsay !’ said Jenny, who had just come up stairs.

‘That’s my name—it must be my cousin !’ murmured Angelina.

‘What shall I do—shall I let her come up ?—she looks awful fierce !’ said the maid.

‘I’ll go and see who she is,’ replied Mr. Precise, ‘but, Jenny, haven’t you got this poor girl’s gruel ready yet. I do declare you’re as slow as a new ‘prentice !’

‘I’ll have it up in a minute, sir !’

Mr. Precise went down stairs, and soon returned with the visitor, who, of course, was Lize.

The woman saw Angelina, and rushing to her bedside, covered her feverish cheeks with kisses, while tears of mingled joy and sorrow gushed from her eyes.

‘Oh ! God, my poor, poor gal—I’ve been e’en a’most crazy about you—why did you run away from the boardin’-house ?’

‘I saw *him*—that young man who has tormented me so. He came to the house after me !’ replied Angelina.

‘There—it was just what I thought ! You saw him and ran away—he didn’t know you was there. He was there to see some one else—but you’re sick. Your head is hot as fire.’

‘Yes, cousin Eliza, I am sick ! and am glad to see you before I die.’

Before you *die* !’ echoed Lize—‘Oh, God, she is not so sick as *that*, is she !’

Then turning to Mr. Precise, she asked,

‘Do, pray tell me, sir, if she is in danger !’

Mr. Precise could not answer.

‘She is—she *is*,’ shrieked the woman, ‘and it’s all my fault ; I ought never to have left her side. Oh, God, why is everything that I love cursed and blasted !’

‘Don’t fret, dear cousin, it is not your fault, and this gentleman has been so very kind to me !’

‘Oh, God bless him for it—he shall never be the loser—but—’

A thought came like lightning over the mind of poor Lize; she remembered that this was the master of Frank Hennock, that he was the very man whom her gang was trying to rob.

‘It shall not be!’ she muttered. ‘No—no—he shall not suffer, if I have to blab it all out!’

‘What does she mean?’ said Mr. Precise, noticing the wild looks and strange language of the woman. ‘What do you mean, my good woman?’

‘To save you from harm—beware of ——, hush, I’ll tell you some other time!’ said Lize, pausing in an instant, as the door opened, and Frank Hennock made his appearance.

‘I’m ready to attend to that business for you, sir,’ said the young rascal, looking as composedly as if he had never seen Lize before.

‘Very well, Francis, go down to the parlour—I’ll try to come down directly.’

‘How is the poor young lady, sir?’ asked Frank, who, noticing the agitation of Lize, began to think it was better not to leave her alone with Mr. Precise.

‘Sick—very sick,’ replied Mr. Precise.

‘The doctor’s here, sir,’ said Jenny, popping her head into the room, ‘and the gruel’s ready, sir.’

‘I must go for a little while,’ said Lize, but I’ll be back afore night, and if you please, sir, I’ll watch with my cousin till she is better.’

‘Yes—poor thing, you may. You’re a good woman to think so much of her, poor creetur, but she sha’n’t suffer while you’re gone!’

The doctor entered at this moment, and as he took the hand of his patient, and glanced at her face, a shadow of care and pain came over his countenance.

Lize watched him closely, as if she would read the fate of her cousin in his look, and tears gushed from her eyes, when she saw his look of anxiety.

‘Save her, doctor, save her life, and I’ll give you all the money I can raise!’

The doctor smiled, and replied:

‘We’ll do our best for her; but money would not add to my skill. We will hope for the best!’

Lize turned away to hide the scalding tears which rushed down her cheeks, which were very pale now. She had taken no time to put paint upon them that morning.

‘I’ll go now,’ she said, ‘and I’ll be back the earlier. Good-bye, Angy! God bless you!’ and she kissed the sick girl fervently.

Frank Hennock followed her down stairs, apparently to let

her out at the front door, but really to get a chance to speak to her.

'Lize,' said he, as he stood on the door-step, 'you're not going to "blow" on us to the old man?'

'No, Frank but you've got to stop robbing him. He's acted like a livin' angel to that poor gal, and I'll not see him harmed! you've got to stop short where you are, or I will blow, that's sure as gospel.'

'You know what a risk you'd run in doing it, don't you!'

'Yes, and you'd run the risk of 'commodations up the river for a while, too,' replied the woman.

'Well, but you'll go and see old Jack, and get him to agree to it, won't you?' asked Frank.

'Yes, and I'll make him pay the old man his money on the forged cheque, too,' said Lize; 'he shan't suffer by any of our gang, when he's acted so kind to my cousin as all this comes to. You've had enough, and too much out of him already!'

'Well, just fix it with old Jack, and I'm easily satisfied. I kinder like the old covey, myself,' replied Frank. And then he added:

'You've not forgotten the hundred dollars, have you, Lize?'

'No, but I've not had time to raise it yet, replied Lize; 'I'll get it of Charley Cooper to day for you. I'm going to live on the square after this, Frank.'

'What! and desert *us*, your old comrades and companions in war?'

'I shall never go on the cross again!'

'Then, farewell to all your greatness! why, Lize, I thought you'd more ambition.'

'Not in that line,' replied Lize; 'but I must go. Remember, now, the old gentleman is not to suffer any more!'

'Of course not, of course not, if *you* say so, Miss Eliza!' and Frank bowed low, and gallantly kissed his hand, as the tall woman hurried away.

Then he muttered to himself:

'This treason must be nipped i' the bud! as Shakespeare says. We'll have to clap a stopper on her jaw-tackle, or she'll blow the gaff! as Cooper says in the *Water-Witch*.'

'What witch? was that great tall woman a witch?' asked Jenny, who had just come up stairs to inform Frank that his breakfast was ready.

'She looked a little like one, didn't she!' laughed Frank.

'Well, she was a strange lookin' creetur; but what was you a sayin' so petikler like?' asked Jenny, a little disposed to be jealous.

'Oh, nothing, only speaking of the sick girl up stairs, who it appears, is her cousin!'

'I wish she'd kept her cousin to hum, so I do!' replied Jenny, spitefully; 'our master's taken such a likin' to her

that there's no doin' any thin' with him now. I'd been expectin' all the time that he'd do sumthin' for us when we got married, and now, I do believe he's goin' to 'dopt her and call her Miss Precise !'

'Shoudn't wonder if he did !' replied Frank.

'Then he'll do nuthin' for us when we get married !'

'Oh, yes, I'm sure he will, *when* we do !' replied Frank ;
'but talking of that, let's go down to breakfast !'

CHAPTER XIII.

FRANK HENNOCK went up stairs to his master as soon as he had finished his breakfast, for he felt uneasy lest Lize might have dropped some hint about her knowledge of him or his character.

The doctor had gone, and Angelina had sunk into a fitful slumber, or rather doze, for ever and anon she would start and mutter in incoherent language, as if terrible dreams were raving through her burning brain.

Mr. Precise laid his finger on his lip, as Frank entered, for him to keep silent, and the latter went in on tip-toe. Bending his lips close to Mr. Precise's ear, he whispered :

'Wont you go down and eat, sir, I'll stay here and watch her !'

'No, Francis, you're a good boy to think of me, but I can't eat now. I'm afraid that poor creetur is agoin' to die !' and the old man took out his handkerchief, not to hide his tears, but to wipe them away.

Frank sighed, and put his handkerchief up to his face too, and said :

'Oh, sir, I hope not. She is so beautiful and looks so good !'

'She bears her suffering like an angel, she does !' said the old man, 'and the poor creetur has only seen the dark side o' life. I want her to live and enjoy the sunshine a little while. If she dies I shall never be happy agin !' and a broken sob burst from his lips.

'What a strange woman that cousin of hers seemed to be !' said Frank.

'Yes, and I'd forgotten, but she talked very strangely to me. I must see her again and get an explanation !'

'What did she say ?' asked Frank, tremulously.

'Water—just a drop, if you please !' murmured the invalid.
'I am so hot. Oh, mercy—my head will burst open with this dreadful pain !'

Mr. Precise sprang to help the poor girl, and Frank could not get the explanation which he desired, but his own guilt made him picture it ten times worse than it really was, and

as soon as he could do so, he begged Mr. P.'s permission to be absent for a little while—saying that he wanted to see his sick mother. He readily gained this permission, for Mr. Precise cared little about attending to business just then. He was not a man who *could* think of many things at once, and his whole heart and soul had become interested in the fate of the poor sewing-girl.

Frank hurried, therefore, as soon as possible, to the house of Jack Circle. He found the latter in his little front bar-room attending to his usual business, but as he passed through into the back-room, he gave him a sign, and Jack soon followed him.

'What's hup now?' asked old Jack, 'what brings you here in the day time?'

'Treason! Clouds dark and ominous hang o'er our house,' cried Frank, assuming a tragical air.

'Clouds be d——d,' said old Circle, who had no ear for poetry—'What's the row? Talk plain hinglish to me—I don't hunderstand nuthin else.'

'Well then—to descend to the grade of your understanding, *we* are in danger,' said Frank.

'Ow?' cried old Jack, 'as any one blowed the gaff?'

'No—not yet, that I know of, but still I have my fears, as George Washington Dixon said about the revolution in Yucatan.'

'Oh, blast your Dixons and revolutions—just speak hout and let hus know what's hup?'

'Well, you know big Lize.'

'Don't know nobody else, she's a reg'lar gallows gal, she is!' replied old Jack.

'May be yes, and may be no!' replied Frank. 'She's gettin' offish lately, and I'm afeared she'll blow the gaff!'

'*She!*' cried Jack in surprise. 'Why, she's one of the best 'ands in the whole gang. No, you needn't be afeared o' her.'

'But she is the one I am afeared of—she saw my master this morning.'

'Wh--what!' cried Circle—'not to blow on us?'

'No—but, you see, he picked up the girl she was asking after the other night—and she's Lize's cousin, and Lize feels grateful,' and she don't want us to *do* the old man!'

'Well, that's kind o' nateral, too, in Lize,' said old Jack, 'but it won't do for us! We've laid out to lift all we can, and 'elp your gov'nor to take care of his property, and she mustn't go for to hinterfere!'

'How will you stop it? She has already said something to put him on his guard, I expect.'

'The bloody 'ell, she has!' cried Jack—'we must jug her,

till arter we've cracked his crib. She didn't say nuthin' about the check ?'

'No, I think not—but she's to see him again this afternoon.'

'No she wont !' replied Jack, 'not if she can be found afore that. I've got a snug berth down in the cellar, for sich as she. Blow the gaff? Why blast her heyes, she's forgotten the rules. I'll have her 'unted up—she'll be here to see me on petikler bizness, afore she's three hours older.'

'That 'll be the only way to keep all safe,' said Frank.

'Yes—but I'm not one as can be koted napping any 'ow,' said Jack. 'I'll fix the lady, I will. Come hout and take summat vet; a pot o' yale, or some 'alf-and-'alf !'

Frank complied with the invitation, and then hastened to return to his master.

'Hit's werry hodd,' soliloquized Jack after Frank had gone away—'hit's werry hodd in Lize to take sich a kink inter'er 'ead ! But there's no tellin' what a 'ooman won't do, if she takes a likin' to a creetur. I thought Lize was safe as a lost ha'penny—but she was allers a wilful human, and there's no more dependin' on a wilful 'ooman, than on a skeery cracksman.'

The old man's daughter Harriet came in at this moment.

'Where've you been, 'Arriet my gal?' asked Jack.

'Round to Jew Mikes—to get the tin for them spoons !' replied she.

'Ow much did he give—is he goin' to melt 'em ?'

'No. He give me the same he did afore. He's agoin' to scrape off the name—rub 'em down and put 'em up for new in the Broadway crib.'

'He's keen, even for a sheeney !' replied Jack, but his conversation was interrupted at this moment by the entrance of customers.

CHAPTER XIV.

WHEN poor Isabella Meadows came to herself, she found that she was in a small room, well furnished, but hung around with licentious and obscene pictures. She shuddered as she judged the character of the place from this; but she felt some relief, on finding herself alone. She arose from the couch whereon she had been carelessly thrown, and going to the door, tried the lock. It had been fastened outside. She glanced around the room, and saw that there was a window in front. She quickly tried the shutters of that, and found that they, too, had been fastened—apparently nailed from the outside.

'No hope, not even the means of death!' she murmured.

She trembled as she heard the bolt of her door turned back, for she expected to see the hated form of Whitmore, and her heart was full of terror. But she was pleasantly disappointed. A young and very pretty girl entered, and then Isabella heard the door locked again by some one who was outside.

'I have come to stay with you to-night!' said the girl. 'Mrs. Swett said you might be lonesome, or feel bad, and want company!'

'Then *he* has gone away?' said Isabella.

'If you mean your beau, I s'pose he has, or the old woman wouldn't have sent me up here, 'specially as the parlour was full of company!'

'I'm glad he is not here—but why am I kept here—why was the door locked just now?'

'Oh! they always do that when a girl first comes here, till she gets a little used to the place. They kept me locked in a whole month, before they'd even let me go down in the parlour.'

'Then you did not come here willingly?'

'Oh! no, indeed! I came to town from ———, up the river, to get work—or to get into a milliner's. When I got down in the boat, I asked a hackman to take me to a respectable boarding-house, and he brought me here. I don't like to tell you the rest—but I've been here six months now. I was very unhappy for a while, but I'm used to it now.'

'Poor girl!' said Isabella, for the moment forgetting her own perilous situation, 'had you no friends?'

'Yes, a mother and two sisters, but Ma'am S. wouldn't let me write to them, and now, I suppose, they think I'm dead!'

'But don't you want to escape from here?'

'No,—not now. What would be the use—I'm ruined for everything but this!' replied the girl. 'No one would give me work—I could not get a place anywhere, it is my only chance for a decent living to stay here now! I get clothes and all I want to eat, and when I get melancholy, I drink wine till I get happy, and forget everything!'

'Oh, God!—is it possible that such a life can be led?' moaned Isabella.

'Oh! you'll get used to it!' said the girl. 'I used to talk and fret, but I found it was of no use, so I made the best of a bad bargain.'

'Is there no way to get out of this horrible house? I know but too well what it is!'

'No—Ma'am S. always keeps the key and lets every one in and out. They say she's very rich, but she don't act so with us poor girls. She manages to get all we make—but if you like, let's go to bed. It's getting late, and I'd like to sleep to-

night. I've had to keep up late every night, and I do feel as if a good night's rest would be so good.'

'You can sleep if you like,' said Isabella, 'but for me, I cannot. Oh, is there not some way of getting out of here?'

'If you had plenty of money you might—the old woman would do anything for money.'

'Alas!' sighed Isabella, 'I have none! Would to God that I had the means of ending my life!'

Poor girl—her prospect was indeed dark. Her companion soon retired, and glad of a chance to rest, soon fell into a sound slumber. But Isabella could not close her eyes. She could hear the sound of laughter and revelry below—and she shuddered at every sound, for she feared, more than all, the return of Whitmore. She did not dream of submitting to the fate which had befallen the poor girl, who slept before her—she determined rather to die.

CHAPTER XV.

THE day passed, and poor Angelina grew no better. Mr. Precise still waited by her side, and the doctor had already called several times. Her fever was at a height which made the crisis near. He knew that ere the dawn of another day her fate would be determined—the fever would turn and break; or her strength would give way entirely.

Noticing that she very often glanced at the door, and seemed to be thinking of something more than her mere illness, Mr. Precise asked:

'What do you look for, my dear? Is there anything I can do for you?'

'No, sir, thank you!' murmured the invalid. 'My cousin said she'd be here before noon—I want to see her. It's strange she don't come.'

'So it is—but don't you know where she lives? I'll send for her.'

'I don't know the number, sir,' replied Angelina; 'it is in Thomas Street, close to Church, but she's seldom at home! You know that I told you she had led a bad life—but she wants to be good now.'

'Yes, yes! I remember. She shall have a chance to reform. I'll take care of her and her poor old father!' replied Mr. Precise.

'I've been trying to think what she meant by her strange language this morning, sir. I'm so afraid some harm is coming to you. She knows all the thieves in the city, I've heard her say, and I'm so afraid they mean to rob you or something.'

'Oh! no,—I can't think so!' replied Mr. Precise; 'besides, I've very little property up here. I keep my money in bank.'

'It is very singular that she stays away so long. She seemed to love me so much—and then she had something important to tell you—but said it should be when she came again.'

'Yes,—she did seem to like you,' said the old gentleman; 'it made me take quite a liking to her!'

'I do wish she'd come—there must be something wrong!' murmured the invalid.

There was indeed something wrong, and it was not by her will that Lize had broken her promise. That had been a sad day for her, so far. We will glance at some of the incidents.

After leaving the house of Mr. Precise, Lize hurried down to her home; and after sitting down awhile there, she started up saying,

'I'll go to old Jack's and put a stop to his robbing that good old gentleman, who is so kind to poor Angy.'

She then went to old Circle's, which place she reached but a short time after Frank Hennock had left. Old Jack was delighted to see her: never before had she seen him so much pleased.

'Vont you take a drop of summat vet; I vos just thinkin' ov you,' said he.

'Well, what do you think, old stick-in-the-mud.'

'Why, my gal, I vos a thinkin' vot a huseful member of our society you vos.'

'Then you'd hate to lose me, wouldn't you?'

'Couldn't think o' sich a thing!' replied Jack. 'Why there arn't such a panneller on the cross has can come hup to you. 'Tild' Hoag arn't nowhere, and the bloody houtsiders never does a job hup right! but what'll you take?'

'Nothin'! come in the back room—I want to talk to ye in private!' said Lize.

'Sartin,' responded Jack; ''ere, 'Arriet, come 'ere and tend bar while I have a patter with Miss Eliza.'

The old man's daughter came in, and Circle whispered something in her ear, then led the way into the back room, where Lize alone followed him. After closing the door, he sat down, and pointing to another seat said:

'Well, what's hup; 'ave you put your peepers on another lay?'

'No, it's not that,' said Lize; 'I've come here, Jack, to get you to break up a lay that you've put up already!'

'To break up a lay, Lize? why thi's su'thin' new,' said Jack, counterfeiting the utmost surprise, though Frank's information led him to expect this turn from her.

'Yes, it is,' she replied; 'but I've got my reasons for it.'

'Vont you say vot they is?' asked Mr. Circle.

'Yes. That man, Mr. Precise, whose crib you've given over for Black Bill and Jack Murphy to crack, has done me a favour that I'll never forget as long as I live. I want you to let him off, and to pay him back the money on that cheque.'

'Wot,' cried Jack in astonishment; 'why wots come hover you, Lize? You ar'n't a goin' to turn a canter, are you?'

'No, I'm not going to do nothing of that sort, but I ask this of you as a favour?'

'Well, Lize, not meaning to give you a short ans'er, the lay is all put up, and I'll be d——d if it's agoin' to be broke up,' said old Jack.

'Then, Cap'n Jack, you'll force me to put the good old man on his guard. I say he shall not be robbed!'

'So—you'd 'peach, would ye? Blow the gaff on us, as allers 'elped you out of hev'ry scrape you got hinto.'

'I don't want to blow on you, Cap'n Jack—but I've made up my mind that old man shall go free of trouble.'

'May be you'd like to be Cap'n of *the* society, eh?' said Jack sarcastically.

'No—nor what's more, I don't mean to have any more to do with you or your gang; I'll live on the square after this.'

'You will, will you! vel, I've only one hobjection to that ere!'

'What is it?'

'Honly, that if you don't choose to live on the cross *with* the society, you shan't live on the square out of it—that's hall.'

'What do you mean, you thieving old fence.'

'I means that ve'll board you at hour own hexpence, hold gal—you needn't work for your livin.'

'I don't understand you!' said Lize.

'Don't yer? Well, jest wait a shake, an' I'll hexplain. 'Arriet my gal, 'as the cider come yet?'

'Two barrel, dad,' replied the girl, from the bar-room.

'Have 'em fotch'd in, we'll stow one barrel away in the cellar!' added the old man.

As he said this, two men entered the back room. They were Black Bill and Jack Murphy, and they stepped in between the door and where Jack and Lize were seated.

'If you're agoing to have company, I'll leave!' said Lize, getting up.

'No—jist 'old hon habout a minnit!' said Jack. 'I want to see wot these 'ere gentlemen 'ud say habout giving up their lay.'

'Givin hup our lay?' growled Black Bill. 'Wot the bloody 'ell's that fur.'

'Yis, if it's a fair questin!' added Jack Murphy, looking first at Circle and then at Lize.

'Why—that 'ere *lady*, Miss Eliza, 'as got a new kink inter

her 'ead, and she wants you to give up crackin the hup-town covey's crib.'

'She be d——d !' said Bill gruffly—'let her mind her hown lays, we'll take care o' hours.'

'We'll trate the ould gintleman kindly, though, if she axes it as a favour!' said Murphy; 'we'll be dacent and leave him a pair o' breeches to put on in the mornin' and a dressin' gownd may be.'

'I'm going !' said Lize—'I see there's no reason in you.'

'Going to blow us?' asked Jack.

'I didn't say that !' replied the girl.

'No—but the devil trust you, I wont, you arn't agoin' hout o' yere just yet !'

'No—I think it's rather could out o' doors, ye might take could !' said Murphy.

Black Bill didn't speak, but he put his broad shoulders against the inside of the door and folded his arms with an air of quiet determination.

'So—you'll keep me a prisoner?' asked Lize.

'Not meanin' for to give you a short answer, I'm d——d if we don't,' replied Jack.

'What, if I promise not to peach !'

'You'd forget your promise, may be, as easy as you make it.'

'No—no, you must let me out, I want to go and look for my father !' said Lize, who began to be a little frightened, at the prospect before her. 'I was only joking with you, Jack, I wouldn't blow the gaff for nothing.'

'An' a pleasant joke it was,' cried Murphy, 'an' it's only a joke Cap'n Jack is a playin' on ye, now !'

'There's no use o' humbuggin,' Jack !' growled Black Bill, 'she's on the trap—let her slide.'

Just at that moment, Jack, who had 'risen and passed over to the side of the room, touched a ring that appeared to be fastened to the ceiling, and Lize felt herself suddenly sinking—the floor seeming to yield beneath her weight. She made a spring towards the door—but was thrust back by Murphy, and in another moment she was hidden in darkness below—the trap having canted and left her upon the ground, in a deep cellar below the room where she had been seated. In a moment, the trap was back in the same place as before, and only the stifled shrieks of poor Lize could be heard.

'Well, that's what I call a rum go!' said Black Bill, after the trap had closed.

'Better come out an' take a go o' rum, to settle your stummac !' said old Jack, coolly. 'She'll be heasy enough, 'till arter you've cracked the old 'un's crib ! I'll tend to her.'

'A very sensible remark o' yours !' said Murphy, 'an' one, I think, as 'll raise no 'jections on our part. By the way,

Cap'n Jack, a matthew-matty-call questi'n 'as jist revolved itself inter my craminyum.'

'Vel, vot is it ;' asked old Jack.

'Why, I've often heard, 'mongst *orthers*, an' other unfortunat individuals, this 'ere question revolved ; whether it wer' possible to square a circle? What's your opinion—as the devil asked of the minister, when he quoted scriptur' to him !

'Why, don't know as I see the sense o' the thing,' replied Jack :—'if it means that one o' the Circle family ever was known to cruise on the square—it's a bloody lie. The whole breed was born on the cross, an' they'll live on it, that's as sure as mad dogs in July !'

'Then it's yer opinion that the Circle can't be squared ?'

'Hexactly !' replied old Jack.

'Thin I'll be afther takin' a drink wid ye, for I'm of the same persuasion, as the divil said to the Methodist !' replied Murphy.

The party now adjourned to the bar room.

CHAPTER XVI.

CHARLES MEADOWS came down to his mother's breakfast-table, pale and haggard, on the morning after his midnight interview with Carlton. He noticed, also, that his mother looked weary and unwell, as if she, like him, had passed a sleepless night ; but she, with a mother's anxiety, was the first to speak.

'Poor Charles ! You're sick this morning !' she exclaimed. 'Mr. S—— must not keep you up so late !'

'It is nothing, mother !' said he with a forced smile, 'we are very busy down at the store, and since he has raised my salary, I must do all I can, you know, for his interest !'

'Yes, that's true, but still you musn't hurt your health, or you will not long have the strength to earn your salary !'

'Oh ! never fear, mother, I shall keep my strength as long as I need it—but you look unwell, mother—what is the matter with you ?'

'I slept very badly, my son, and I had such a horrible dream about you and your sister !'

'A dream about us—what was it mother ?'

'I hate to think of it,' replied the old lady, with a shudder—'It was dreadful ;—but I do wish you'd go and see 'Bella, I'm afraid she's sick !'

'No danger of that, mother,—I saw Harry Whitmore just as I was coming home last night, and he said he'd just left her and his sister, well and hearty !'

'But wont you go and see her this morning?' urged the mother.

'I'll not have time to-day, mother—but it's likely she'll come home during the day—if she don't, I'll go and see her this evening, if I can possibly spare the time!'

'Well, do—I cannot drive that terrible dream from my mind!'

'What was it, mother? do tell me!'

'Oh God, it was horrible! I dreamed that I saw a snake folding itself around poor 'Bella in great slimy folds—and her face grew dark—and her eyes turned red with agony, and her tongue stuck out from her mouth, and the blood streamed down from bursting veins upon her bosom, and yet I could not help her. Then I saw the head of a snake, and it had a human face—a face just like Mr. Whitmore's. Oh! I'm so afraid some harm 'll come to the poor girl through him!'

'Pshaw, mother—it was only a dream!' replied the son—'Harry Whitmore is the very soul of honour. I would trust him quicker than any man in town. Besides, he loves Bella—has openly told me so, and as I know only waits to get his mother's consent to offer her his hand in honourable marriage.'

'Well, well—we are all in the hands of God!' murmured the mother.

'But go on—tell me all your dream!'

'Well—continued the old lady—'I looked at poor Bella, till I saw her a crushed, blackened, and shapeless mass, and then it seemed as if wings were given to me to fly away from the dreadful spot, and I found myself in a town. It seemed to be night, but I could see as plainly as if it was broad daylight. I saw you—and I was trying to get to you to tell you about poor Bella, when you looked at me and motioned to me to keep back. I couldn't think what you meant, but I saw you step into a little shadow and crouch down as if you wanted to hide yourself. And then I noticed you had a pistol in your hand!'

'A pistol, mother,' shrieked the young man, springing from his seat and turning pale.

'Yes, child; but what is the matter?'

'Nothing, mother, nothing, go on, it is *only* a dream.'

She continued:

'I tried to go to you, but again it seemed as if I was fastened to the earth. Then I saw a man and a woman walking along towards where you were. The woman was very pale, and was weeping; but she didn't look like our 'Bella.'

'Go on, mother! go on, tell me all,' cried the son, impatiently.

'Well, they two came on till they got just where you were, and there they stopped, and the woman went on talking to the man, and crying. But he seemed stern and cold, and then she acted as if she were pleading to him for some favour.

‘But he shook his head, and pushed her back from him, when she tried to kiss him.

‘Then she seemed to get angry, and shook her clenched hand at him and stamped her foot upon the ground, and just then you crept slowly out from the shade and——’

‘*Killed him!* say, mother, did I kill him?’ screamed Meadows, interrupting his mother, and glaring upon her with eyes that seemed to be bursting from their sockets.

‘Oh mercy! my son! what is the matter?’ shrieked the old lady; ‘don’t be so excited, it was only a dream.’

‘True mother, true, but I was so excited in it, that I had forgotten myself. Pray, go on; I will not interrupt you again.’

‘Well,’ she continued, ‘I watched you steal out carefully behind him, until you got so close that you could touch him; and the woman saw you, too, but didn’t say anything, till you raised your hand with the pistol in it close to his head; and then she turned and ran away. Just at the same moment, I saw the smoke, and heard a noise, as if your pistol had gone off, and I screamed and woke up.’

‘Oh horrible—horrible!’ groaned the son, while great drops of sweat came out upon his brow, and then he murmured:

‘It is *only* a dream.’

‘Yes, child, that’s all. Don’t take on about it, or I shall be sorry I told you.’

‘Don’t you believe dreams come true sometimes, mother?’ asked the son.

‘Well, I don’t know. They used to in the bible days, but I hope these won’t,’ she replied—‘I know they can’t! ‘Bella is as pure as a snow-drop, and I know you’re too good to kill a man; when you were a boy, you wouldn’t so much as kill a fly, like the other boys.’

‘Wouldn’t I?’ asked the young man, in a thoughtful manner.

‘No—nor even fight with your schoolmates, except they forced a fight on you.’

‘Then you think I’d not have spunk enough to kill a man,’ said the clerk with a strange, wild laugh.

I hope you’d never have the heart to do it,’ replied Mrs. Meadows.

‘Not even in self defence, eh?’ continued Charles.

‘Why I suppose that *would* be different,’ replied the old lady—‘but I hope you’ll never be placed in such a dreadful necessity.’

The young man shuddered, but did not reply.

‘Why don’t you eat your breakfast—it’s all getting cold. I do declare you haven’t eaten a mouthful,’ cried the mother.

‘Your dreams have spoiled my appetite,’ replied he.

‘Oh, never mind them, my son—they’re *only* dreams. I

s'pose I was thinking of you and 'Bella, when I went to sleep—come, drink your coffee.'

'No—I cannot! It is time I went down to the store,' replied the son. 'I don't feel very well this morning.'

'Poor child, you *do* look sick! You must have more sleep—there's nothing wears young folks out more quickly than want of rest and irregular hours.'

'But I must attend to business, mother.'

'Not at the expense of your health, my dear son. I'd rather live on less than to see you look so pale and care-worn.'

'You're a good, kind mother,' said the son feelingly. 'We'll all do well, and be happy bye and bye.'

'I hope so,' sighed the mother—'we've seen pretty close times—but yet we have no right to complain, for there are those in this great city who'd be very glad to change situations with us.'

'Not with me!' thought the unhappy clerk—'not with me, surrounded as I am by everything to make me wretched.'

Those frightful dreams had thrown a cloud over his heart, and he could neither eat nor smile. He soon started down towards his store. While on his way, he met with Selden and Carlton, the latter drew him over to the other side of the street, and in a low tone said:

'I am now arranging that business for you. You must manage to get excused from the store to-day—I wish you to spend the day with me!'

'I cannot,' replied the clerk, with a shudder—'I have several important accounts to make out for Mr. S.'

'They *must* be deferred until to-morrow!' said Carlton, in a firm tone. 'This day must be spent with me—for we have weighty matters to arrange!'

'Relative to my leaving the city?'

'Yes,' replied the gambler, 'and also in the other matter which formed the subject of our last conversation!'

'The murder?—Oh! for God's sake spare me from that!' gasped Meadows, with a shudder.

'Pshaw, don't be a fool, young man!' replied the other, grating his teeth in his impatience. 'I thought this was all settled between us!'

'So it was—yet it is dreadful to do a murder!' replied Meadows, keeping his eyes fixed upon the ground as if he did not dare to lift them, even to the face of the wretch who confronted him.

'It's nothing after you get used to it!' replied the gambler, in a careless tone. 'If I was not sure to be suspected, I'd kill the rascal, myself! I'd no more mind putting him out of the way, than I would a snake that lay in my path!'

'The dream will come true—and if *one*, the other,' muttered Meadows, not seeming to heed the remarks of Carlton.

'What dream are you talking of?' asked the latter.

'You know Harry Whitmore,' continued Meadows, without heeding the question—'What kind of a man is he?'

'A devilish *fine* fellow!' replied Carlton.

'But is he honourable—is he not a *libertine*?' continued the clerk, raising his eyes in a searching glance to the face of the other.

'A libertine? No, indeed! Harry may sometimes cruise around a little and go to *see* the fashions, but he was never wild in that way, to my knowledge!'

'You do not believe he would ruin a pure young girl under the mask of love and friendship?'

'No, indeed! He would be the last man in the world to do that! He is the very soul of honour,' replied the gambler, who, though he did not comprehend the reason or drift of the clerk's questionings, knew enough to protect the 'fair name' of a confederate in villany.

Meadows seemed to breathe more freely after Carlton's last reply. A load was taken from his breast.

'I will not believe the dream in regard to *her*,' he murmured 'but *mine* must come true!'

'What dreams are you speaking of?' cried Carlton. 'Blast the thing—you must be crazy!'

'No, not yet!' replied Meadows, 'but I've a very fair prospect of being so before long.'

'Pshaw, man! you are acting childishly. Go to your store and excuse yourself—tell them your mother is very sick, or use some other white fib, and then come to my rooms. We will arrange our matters over a quiet glass of that old Osborn wine!'

'Does *he* know anything of it?' asked Meadows, indicating with a gesture, Sam Selden, who stood on the opposite curbstone tapping the toe of his elegant boot with a slight rattan held in his gloved hand.

'Yes, Sam and me have no secrets between us!' said Carlton.

The gambler was slightly mistaken. He did not know that Selden had tried first to seduce his wife—and that if he had succeeded, he would have been the last to excite her husband's jealousy.

'Why could not he do this job?' asked the clerk.

'Because, as I told you before, he and I are too intimate. He, like myself, would be suspected. When the deed is done we must *both* be at home. You will not even be dreamed of!'

'Ha! ha! I have been already!' cried Meadows, with a hollow laugh.

'What! why young man you must be crazy? What do you mean?'

'My mother dreamed that she saw me kill a man last night.'

‘Indeed ! well her, dream will come true—but old women’s dreams are not evidence in law now-a-days. You’ll be in no danger from her evidence or anything else.’

‘I wish it was all over !’ sighed the unhappy young man, ‘and that I and my family were across the blue waters.’

‘So do I, heartily,’ added Carlton, ‘but if wishes were horses beggars might ride. You must *act* ; it lies with yourself to finish all and to off in less than a week.’

‘Yes, and it must be done !’ said the clerk, gloomily. ‘You must *arrange* all—I am but your tool, and you can use me.’

‘Well, you’ll get excused and spend the day with me?’

‘Yes, if I must.’

‘Very well, then. We’ll separate now—it is not best for us to be seen together much. I’ll expect you in half an hour.’

Carlton rejoined Seldon and passed on up the street, while Meadows with his eyes still fixed upon the ground turned the corner and walked down Broadway quite abstracted.

PART FIFTH.

CHAPTER I.

ISABELLA MEADOWS did not close her eyes during that long and weary night. She had listened to the rough shoutings of drunken men in the streets—she had heard the tolling of the fire-bell—she had heard the old clock of St. John’s tell each hour as it rolled slowly along over the heavy ocean of time. She had shuddered while she listened to the sounds of revelry in the rooms below—and she had heard shrieks mingling with laughter. It was a dreadful night to her. And yet the poor girl who had been sent in to pass the night with her, glad of a chance to get one night’s rest, slept—slept as soundly as if guilt and misery had not made their home in her bosom.

Daylight came, and through the slatted blinds of the fastened shutters, thin rays of early light peeped in. Isabella once more tried the small window, but it was closely fastened ; besides, it was so small that her body could scarcely have passed through it, if it were open.

‘No hope—not even of death !’ she murmured, tearfully. ‘Oh ! if my brother or my poor mother knew of this. Charles would rescue me, or die.’

At that very moment they were talking of her, for it was the time when Mrs. Meadows was relating her dream.

At this same moment the girl, who had slept so soundly, woke, with a start, and looking wildly around her burst into tears.

'Oh, dear !' she murmured, 'I had such a happy dream. I thought I was at home again, sleeping in the little back room with my sister Lottie, and the flowers were twining up around the window casings ; and I heard the birds sing just as I used to do ! Oh, why could I not have died in such a dream !'

'Poor girl !' sighed Isabella ; 'death would indeed be a relief from such a life ; yet you do not wish to die !'

'No, no, not exactly ! I do wonder if it's breakfast time,' replied the girl, recovering from the momentary delirium of her dream, and sinking its 'romance' into plain 'reality.'

'Has no one been in yet ?' she continued.

'No,' replied Isabella ; 'since about three o'clock everything has been still in the house.'

'Yes ; that's shuttin' up hour,' said the girl ; 'but you didn't undress—haven't you been to bed ?'

'No,' replied Isabella ; 'I have not closed my eyes—nor will I, except in death, while I remain under this roof !'

'You oughtn't to take on so,' said the girl—'it's no use. I've seen others act just so, and they didn't make nothin' by it !'

Their conversation was interrupted by some one opening the door. The next moment a hideous looking, poc-marked old negro woman opened the door, and said to the young girl :

'Missus wants you, Miss Clementina.'

'Is that your name ?' asked Isabella, of the young girl.

'It's the name Ma'am S. gave me, but my real name is Mary,' replied the girl. 'All the girls have new names given to 'em when they come here. We've got a Fanny Ellsler—a Virginie—a Lady Montague—a Blanch and Constance—but theyr'e all fancy names.'

'Missus wants you right away, Miss Clem. !' cried the old negress, and then dropping a curtsy, while she grinned a horrible attempt at a smile, she looked at Isabella and said :

'If de new Misse please—Joanner 'll take her footin' !'

Isabella glanced at her companion to know the meaning of this strange remark.

'She means you must give her a present. It's always the way when girls first come out.'

'Alas ! I have nothing in the world to give her, here ; but if she or you will help me out of this dreadful house, I'll give you all that I can get. *Do*, if you have hearts in you—*do* help me away from here. Just let me out ?'

'I'd like to see 'em do it,' said a sharp voice at the door, and the flushed face of Ma'am S. was thrust in.

'Clem., go down stairs,' said she. 'Joanna, go and attend

to your cooking ! when I send you on an errand, I want you to hurry ; not to stop and palaver with my boarders !'

The negress and the young girl vanished before this storm of words, and the landlady stood alone in the door-way, with her arms akimbo, and her hands resting upon her hips.

'Young lady,' said she, in a lower tone, 'if you know what is best for you, you'll just take things easy. No one is agoin' to hurt you—and if you'll only be quiet, I'll treat you like a lady. Anything you want to eat or drink shall be sent up—you shall have books, or the papers, or anything that's reasonable !'

'Oh, for mercy's sake, then, let me go home !'

'That's unreasonable !' replied the landlady. 'Your lover, Harry Whitmore, has engaged board for you—and as he pays me a hundred dollars a week it would be a losing business for me to part with you.'

'Oh, God, have mercy on me ! Is there no hope !' murmured the unhappy girl, while tears burst afresh from her swollen eyes.

'There's no use in your taking on about it,' said the woman, coldly. 'Your betters have led the way before you. It's only your fancy and rotted pride that makes you fret. Harry 'll keep you like a lady, if you behave yourself, and if you don't choose to take it easy, you may take it rough, that's all.'

'Oh, mercy, mercy ! If you'll let me go from here I'll give you a hundred, yes, five hundred dollars.'

'Poh ! Harry would give me a thousand to keep you. You must think I'm green ! Just make yourself easy, my lady, that's my advice. Now be a good girl and I'll be a mother to you.'

'A mother ? Oh, God, if my mother only knew where I was !' sighed the wretched girl.

Yes, but the *if* is in the way !' said the hag. She was about to say more, but hearing the bell of the street door rung, she locked the door upon Isabella, and descended. She found Gus. Livingston at the door, whom, as a friend and follower of Whitmore, she knew very well.

'Well Gus,' said she, familiarly, 'what brings you here so early. I didn't know that you was brave enough to come to my door in the open day-light.'

'Business makes a difference,' said Gus, as he entered the open door.

'Yes, *in* course, but what *is* your business ?' asked the landlady.

'You've got a bird caged for Harry Whitmore.'

'Yes, I s'pose he told you so.'

'Yes, and sent me here to pay his respects, as he is unable to come, and also to pay you over a couple of hundred,' said Gus, handing her the money.

'Why, what's the matter with him this morning!' asked the landlady—'did he go on a spree last night—headache and all that, this morning?'

'Well, his head certainly must ache a little, there being a lump on it fully as large as a piece of chalk—but a broken arm is his main excuse for sending a substitute this morning.'

'Why, you don't mean to say he has given the girl over to you?' exclaimed Ma'am S.

'No, not exactly. But he told me to see the young fool, and talk to her.'

'Well, you won't make much at it. She's all clouds and rain-drops. It is strange what fools these young girls *are*, but they *will* be so, there isn't one in five hundred that takes to living out naturally.'

'Where is she?' asked Livingston, who, in attempting to see Isabella, was certainly overstepping the errand upon which he came.

'Up stairs; I'll show you her room—but you mus'n't offer to plague her!' replied the landlady.

'Of course not—I'm Harry's *friend*, and *honour*, you know!' replied Gus.

'There's devillish little honour amongst men where a pretty girl's in the way!' replied Ma'am S., evincing a very true knowledge of human nature in her remark. 'But I'll trust you, Gus,' she added—'because you know that Harry would cut your heart out if you was to try to take her away from him.'

'He isn't in a way to do much cutting just now!' said Gus, with a laugh, following the landlady up stairs.

'When'll he be able to be out—you didn't tell me now his arm was broken!' said Ma'am S.

'Answering your last question first—he got his arm broken in a row—and he'll not be out for a day or two yet.'

'Well, so much the better. The girl 'll have time to settle down and be reasonable,' said the landlady.

The next moment she unlocked the door, and Gus, Livingston stood in the presence of Isabella. Ma'am S. retired at the same time.

'Miss Meadows, I presume?' said Livingston. 'We have met before, I believe.'

Isabella could not for a moment bring him to her recollection, for he was dressed in the height of fashion, and looked quite differently from his appearance when dressed in a priest's gown.

'Have you, too, come here to persecute me?' she asked, sadly, as she shrunk back from his earnest gaze.

'No, indeed, my dear Miss; quite the contrary, I assure you, upon my honour. Knowing your brother as intimately as I do, I cannot be otherwise than a *friend*.'

'A friend!' she cried—'yet you are *his*, Henry Whitmore's friend! I remember you now—I saw you last night—your dress only was different.'

'It is very true, Miss Meadows, and I was performing my part in a little masquerade got up by my friend Whitmore, but I did not dream that *you* were intended for a part in it!'

'Then you were not a willing accomplice in his villany?' asked the trembling girl.

'Indeed I was not—I did not know that *you* were there, or that Harry had any dishonourable intentions towards you. If I had, I should not have permitted it; my regard for my particular friend, your brother, whom I saw but a few minutes ago, would have forbidden it.'

'You saw him, you say, a few minutes ago—did you tell him of my situation?'

'No,' replied Livingston, 'I thought it best to rescue you from it without a noise; it will preserve your reputation, you know, from any little remarks which might be made!'

'Then you have come here to rescue me?'

'Yes, on conditions!' replied the young man.

'What are they?' asked Isabella, in a tremulous tone.

Gus. took her by the hand gently, and in a manner as mild as if he were about to pay her a compliment, said— Reader we cannot repeat his words. They were enough to bring the red blood up into her pale face with a mantling wave of fire—her large eyes flashed—she sprung to her feet, and while her beautiful form seemed to swell into an increased stature, she flung his hand from her, and shrieked, rather than spoke:

'Wretch! fiend! *dog!* Is this your friendship?'

'By Jove, you *are* a beauty!' cried Gus., looking upon her as she stood there in the very majesty of just anger, 'I will have a kiss if I die for it!'

As he spoke, he stepped toward her.

'Back, sir! stand back, if you value your life!' cried the indignant girl, forgetting that she was weak and weaponless.

'By Jove, but you do up tragedy well. Simpson would save the Park, if he'd engage you,' said Gus., still advancing.

She saw that she could not stop him, and bounding toward the little window, dashed her form against it with her full force, crushing the glass, and endeavouring to precipitate herself through it into the street.

She would inevitably have succeeded, had not Livingston seized her, and drawn her back. At the same moment Ma'am S. rushed into the room.

'What the deuce is the matter!' she cried. 'What's all this, Gus., have you broken your word?'

'No, not exactly. I just tried to get a kiss from this proud

chit, and she boxed my ears, and then tried to jump out of the window !'

'The more foolish she—but just come away, and let her alone,' said the landlady.

Gus., who was not much encouraged by his reception, complied with her request, and Isabella was once more alone.

She had cut her hand badly with the broken glass, but she did not speak or murmur. Her tears were dried—her face was pale—pale with desperation. Her compressed lips—flashing eyes and heaving bosom, all spoke of the same feeling. When the door was locked again, she returned to the window and examined it. A smile came over her pale face when she saw that she had loosened the casement, and now could push the shutter open.

'I can *die* now, when death or dishonour becomes my choice,' she murmured, as she looked down from the dizzy height upon the ragged pavement below. And she smiled again at the thought, for she did not feel as defenceless as before.

Then she noticed that persons were continually passing to and fro below her, and a new thought rushed into her head, for when people are in peril, they think strangely fast.

She turned around to the table to seek for writing materials, but none were there. Yet her blood was streaming—it was a fitting ink to write a message of distress with. Tearing a blank leaf from a book, and taking a pin from her dress, she dipped the head of the latter in a gash in her hand, and wrote these words upon the paper.

'I am kept here a prisoner, against my will. For the love of Heaven, come to my aid and rescue me while I am yet pure and innocent, or send the police to my aid ! God will reward you, and a wretched helpless girl will pray for you. I write in my own blood—I have no ink !'

Quickly folding up this note, she returned to the window, opened it a little way and peeped out.

She saw some negroes passing, but they looked ragged and filthy, and she did not want to trust them.

A butcher's cart was approaching, and on its front a young, red-headed, fair-faced fellow of twenty years of age, or thereabout, was seated. She saw only that he looked *honest*, and that his eyes chanced to be turned up toward her face. She reached out her hand and dropped the paper, and she could have wept with joy when she saw that it fell into his cart. The young man reached back and took it up, and then she saw him check his horse and read the paper.

He did not seem exactly to understand it, for he scratched his head and pored over it several minutes, and then looked back at the window.

Isabella stretched out her bleeding hand, and watched his

motions with intense interest. But she could not tell what were his intentions—for after again looking intently on the note, and then turning his eyes toward her, he drove on up the street, scratching his head as if in search of an unexploded idea.

Now her heart was heaved upon the waves of uncertainty. The question to her was whether he would return with help—or let it pass by unheeded.

But in no better hands could her note have fallen, than into those of red-headed Mose, the Bowery butcher-boy, one who with some faults possessed some of the most sterling virtues that ever warmed the human heart.

When he picked up the note, as we have already seen, he drove on a little way, and stopped to read it.

‘This smells o’ blood—by thunder!’ he muttered, as he looked at it. ‘Gal—prisoner against her will!—somethin’s up—’

He paused, and looked back at the little window, where he saw her white hand, streaked with blood, waving to him.

‘Shouldn’t wonder if there’s a muss in that ’ere house to-night!’ muttered he, scratching his head, and again reading the hastily written note.

‘She must be game!’ he continued—‘She aint afraid o’ blood: she must be a gallo’s gal. I’ll see her out—sure’s my name’s *Mose*. Can’t do it now—must sarve the cust’mers, and hunt up *Sikesey*, and four or five more of the b’boys, and then it’ll be dark, and we can go in—we can!’

Mose took one more look at the window, and then putting the note away in a greasy pocket, beneath a white apron, amongst the proceeds of his morning’s sales, was about to drive on, when Isabella put her head entirely out of the window.

Mose looked at her steadily for a moment.

‘By gosh!’ he muttered, she looks *prezactly* like little Bell Meadows, sister to Charley, that I used to go to school with! It must be *her*. I’ll go to look for Charley, soon’s I get through my route.’

He determined to satisfy himself as to her identity, and turning his cart around, drove back past the house.

‘Isn’t that Bell Meadows?’ he asked, in a low tone, but loud enough for her to hear it.

‘Yes, yes! oh, do for Heaven’s sake help me!’ replied she.

‘I won’t do nothin’ else—but you jist keep shady, and don’t say nothin’ to nobody afore night-time! I’ll be thar, *then*, me and *Sikesey*! But where’s Charley?’

‘In S——’s store. Oh, do let him know I am locked up here!’

‘Well, I will!’ replied Mose, and then drove off.

CHAPTER II.

ANOTHER morning had dawned upon poor Angelina. Its light did not fall upon her flushed cheeks this time. Her fever had passed away, and there she lay, pale, weak, and helpless, with scarce strength to speak.

Mr. Precise was nearly as pale as she, for he also had passed another sleepless night by her bedside. He seemed to be as much interested in her fate as if she was his own daughter, and tears welled out from his eyes, as he noted how sadly fast she was changing.

It was not long after daylight that Jenny came up stairs, treading very noiselessly as he had directed her, and asked him if he would not go down to breakfast.

'No, Jenny—bring me a cup of tea, and a piece of toast, with a very little butter on it,' he replied; 'and do the toast quite brown, Jenny!'

'Anything for her, poor thing?' asked Jenny, glancing at Angelina.

'No, not before the doctor comes. He said she mustn't take anything till he saw her—he'll be here directly!' replied the kind old gentleman. Then, as Jenny was about to turn away, he asked:

'Where is Francis?'

'In the basement, readin' July Sneezer!' replied the maid.

'Reading what?' asked the old gentleman, in the same low tone.

'July Sneezer, out o' Shakspeare!' repeated the girl.

'Julius Cæsar, you mean, don't you child?'

'Yes, sir, I 'spect that's it—it's very grand; he was just a readin' that part where Brutus sticks him in the stomach with a knife—oh, it's so grand!'

'Well, well, never mind! Don't speak so loud, Jenny—you'll disturb her. When you go down, tell Francis I want to see him, after he has had breakfast.'

The maid departed to enjoy more tragedy with her lover, or rather to take her part in the familiar and pleasant domestic drama of the Breakfast.

Noticing an anxious glance which the invalid cast toward the door, the old gentleman arose, and as he bent over her, asked:

'Was you thinking of the doctor, dear? He'll soon be along—he said he'd be here early!'

'No, it was not of him. He cannot save me!' replied the poor girl; 'but I was thinking of my cousin. It is so strange that she has not come back. I do so want to see her before I die!'

'Don't talk of dying, dear,' said the old man, brushing away a tear. 'I don't see what can keep your cousin away.'

'I am afraid she has come to harm, sir,' murmured the sick girl. 'Though she has been very wicked, I know she is sorry for it, and her very tears proves that she loves me!'

'Yes, yes. But what harm could come to her?'

'I cannot tell, yet I feel as if it is so. I do so want to see her and my uncle before I die!'

'You shall, if they can be found—I will send Francis out to look after them—he will be up here directly—ah, there is the doctor—I know his ring at the bell—it is quick and sharp, for he is always in a hurry.'

In a moment the doctor entered, and, hastening to the invalid's side, felt her pulse, and spoke kindly to her.

'I shall die, doctor!' she murmured. 'You need not be afraid to tell me—I do not fear to die. I have prayed God to take me away, for I have had but little joy in life.'

The doctor was a stern man—he had been at many a death-bed; without a tremor he could even then have amputated an arm or a leg, but his lips quivered, and his eyes filled, as he gazed upon the young and patient sufferer.

'I will come again, by and bye!' he said, softly, and then he went out of the room. Mr. Precise followed him.

'Will she live, doctor?' he asked, when the door was closed behind him.

Tears gushed out of the doctor's eyes. 'I was called too late!' he said. 'The fever has gone, but it has carried her life with it—I could hardly feel her pulse, and her hand is cold as marble!'

'My God, how hard!' said the old man. 'I have just learned to love her so, and I was agoing to adopt her—oh, it is too hard!' and the noble hearted old gentleman wept like a child.

'I will come again—but it is of no use; she will not live till to-morrow morning!' said the doctor.

Mr. Precise tried to dry his eyes, and went into the room again, but Angelina saw plainly the traces of his tears.

'Do not weep for me, my dear, good friend!' she murmured. 'It is best for me to go away. I have prayed God to take me home to him, and I hope he will. I have tried to be good, and often, often have I knelt down and prayed to Him to prepare me for death!'

'You are a living angel!' sobbed Mr. Precise—'I wish I could die in your place. I am an old body, and not worth much—but you are so good-hearted, you ought to live!'

The door opened, and Frank entered.

'You wanted me, sir?' said he, in a low tone.

'Yes, Francis. I wish you to go and hunt up the woman

that was here yesterday morning. Big Lize, she is called, I believe !

‘But where can I find her?’ he asked.

‘Somewhere in Thomas Street, close to Church, her poor cousin says. Now go and hunt everywhere—I want to see her very much—she commenced telling me something yesterday !’

‘What was it, sir?’ asked Frank, quickly.

‘I don’t exactly know, Francis, but tell her to come here quickly—I wish to see her—besides her poor cousin (Mr. P. said this in a whisper) is on her death-bed !’

‘Poor creature !’ said Frank, taking out his white handkerchief, and raising it to his eyes.

‘You are a good boy, Francis—but now hurry away, and try and find her cousin !’

‘Yes, sir,’ said Frank, but as soon as he got outside the door, he added, ‘*in a horn.*’

The meaning of that very popular phrase may not be understood by all our readers, but Frank meant by it, that he should not trouble himself much in the search for Lize.

‘Things are coming to a head !’ he muttered, as he stood upon the landing at the head of the stair-case. ‘Jack’s men ’ll be here to-night. I think I better mizzle now. With me, to go or not go, is the question. Whether it would be better to stay and see the fun out, or to make myself scarce. If I stay I’ll have a scene—but there’s precious little romance in a night-row, as Byron said of sea-sickness ! Jenny is getting too loving also ; her affection is rising very fast, and I reckon I’d better slope, for fear of accidents ! But then——’

‘Francis !’ said his master, opening the door. ‘Ah, I’m glad you haven’t gone yet. My new watch has run down, and I’ve lost the key or mislaid it !’

‘Will mine fit it, sir ?’ asked the young villain.

It was tried, but would not do.

‘Take my watch with you, then, Francis, and get a key that’ll fit it—a common brass key will do just as well as any !’

The young villain’s eyes glistened as he took the valuable watch, which had been bought to supply the place of that borrowed by Captain Tobin.

‘Now, go on—but do you want anything more?’ asked Mr. Precise, observing a hesitating look in Frank’s face.

‘Why, sir, if it wouldn’t be too much trouble, I’d like to get fifteen dollars—it’s my mother’s rent day, and she hasn’t enough to pay it !’

‘You’re a good boy—always dutiful, Francis !’ replied the old gentlemen, taking out his wallet, and unrolling some bills.

‘Why, I haven’t anything less than a fifty !’ said he. ‘Never mind, Francis, get it changed, and bring me back the change, and do be quick !’

'Of course, sir,' said Frank, pocketing the watch and money, and descending the stair-way.

'These are on my own hook!' he muttered, 'and they're sufficient reasons to decide me. The die is cast—farewell to Jenny, and my secretaryship!'

Without taking a formal leave of the housemaid, Frank put on his over-coat and departed, putting his beautiful pocket edition of Shakspeare in his pocket, as also sundry other light but valuable articles, which he had collected in anticipation of this hour. Among these was a stocking foot, which contained all of Jenny's earnings, for though Frank had objected to this appropriation when spoken of before the gang, he saw no reason for not taking it upon 'his own hook.'

CHAPTER III.

BIG LIZE was not a woman to despair—not one who would sink down and give way to weakness and tears, and when she found herself entrapped and caged by Circle, after a few shrieks and curses uttered in the bitterness of the moment, she rose from the damp ground where she had fallen, and began groping around to find what kind of a place she was in. It was utter darkness, but she soon found the wall, and by slowly traversing its sides, found that she was in a cell of about ten or twelve feet square, which was separated by a wall of stone from the outer cellar, next to the street, where old Jack kept his ales and liquors.

She of course did not know the thickness of this wall, but as she heard the noise of waggons and carts that were passing in the street, through it, a hope came to her heart that she might dig her way out. But she had no tools. She felt of the stones—they were small and irregular, of the kind generally used in building cellar walls, and cemented together with ordinary plaster.

At first she tried to tear out some of the stones; but in the effort she only lacerated her hands, without starting a single piece. Yet she had a weapon—what woman is there below the grade of the 'upper-ten' who does not carry it? She had *scissors* in her pocket.

She quickly tried them, and to her joy found that with their points she could scrape away the cement little by little. Yet it was a slow and weary task, and after she had worked for hours, she had only got a little ways into the wall.

She knew the day had passed away, for she could hear the noise of the gang when they assembled in the evening, and as she paused from her labour to listen, she heard a plan laid out for robbing the house of Mr. Precise. The gang had

received accurate information from Frank Hennock, and knew where everything lay, and even had prepared a key from an impression which Frank had taken, to open the little iron safe in which the old gentleman kept his ready money.

And all this time Lize was in agony. Her heart yearned to know where and how her wretched father was; her tortured fancy painted her poor cousin dying; and then her noble benefactor was to be robbed and ruined, and she who might have saved him was there a walled-in, helpless prisoner. She cursed, and raved, and tore her hair, but it was useless. A mocking laugh from the upper room was her only answer. She shouted for water, for her feverish lips were burning like fire, but not a drop could she get; she had eaten scarcely anything for two days, so exciting had been the scenes through which she had passed, yet not a mouthful of food was offered to her.

And yet she would not despair. With bleeding hands she worked on; now and then, it is true, she uttered a low moan, as her swollen heart would heave beneath the weight of its misery, but not a tear fell from her eyes. On through the long and weary watches of the night she toiled—after everything was still above her—careful to make no noise, yet scraping away in dust the cement which bound the stones of the wall together, and yet when the noise above and outside began again, and she knew thereby that another day had dawned, she had not cleared away more than six or eight inches in depth. True, she had loosened the way and taken out several of the stones, yet she began to grow weak, and her heart trembled when she thought that her strength would fail her before she could open a passage. Her only hope was in getting out in time to warn Mr. Precise, and she knew that it must be done by night, or at least, early in the evening.

Her thirst increased every moment, for her fever of course added to it, and time after time she raised her raw and bleeding fingers to her lips to suck them.

Some hours after daylight, however, she heard the trap-door above her move, and quickly ceasing her work she cast herself upon the ground.

‘Ow’re you are gittin’ halong, hold gal?’ cried Circle.

‘For God’s sake give me some water!’ moaned Lize in a piteous tone, not caring that the wretch should know how she was getting along.

‘Summat vet, eh? Wouldn’t you like suthin’ a leetle stronger than water?’ said he, in a bantering tone.

‘Anything you like. Jack. Oh, do have mercy on me, I am dying!’ moaned Lize in a still weaker tone, used purposely to deceive him. ‘Don’t treat me worse than you would a dog! Indeed I’m dying!’

'That be blow'd!' cried Jack, roughly, 'dyin' ar'nt so bloody heasy's all that! But I'll give you summat vet, for I don't mean to starve you to death. Vot 'll you 'ave—a pot o' 'alf-an-'alf, or a taste o' gin?'

'Water, water, I'm in a burning fever!' moaned Lize.

'Well, then I'll give you some o' the jug diet—you're used to that!' said the old man, and closing the trap he went away.

He returned in a few minutes and opening it again, lowered down a basket which contained a jug of water and a loaf of bread.

'Thank God!' murmured Lize, as she saw this timely supply.

'Better thank me, hold gal!' cried Jack. 'Take 'em out o' the basket, I want to 'aul it up agin'!'

Lize took the water and bread—and Jack hauled up the basket and closed the trap over her.

She raised the jug to her lips and took a long, long draught of the cooling water.

'Thank God!' she murmured again, fervently.

Oh, how sweet was that draught to her. Never tasted wine richer to an epicure—it was nectar to her.

And then she broke the loaf and ate ravenously. Not a gourmand in our city ever enjoyed a meal as she did that. She felt that it would give her strength to renew her work. She would have given anything to have bathed her hot brow and burning hands in the water, but she dared not—it was too precious.

After using a part of her food and water, she carried it near the place where she had been at work, and placing it carefully upon the ground renewed her labour. Her strength was much restored now, for hope again found a home in her heart. Though her hands were cut to the very bone with the sharp and jagged stones, she dug away during all of that live-long day. As she kept on, the sounds from the street came more plainly to her ears, and at last she actually got a glimpse of light, through a narrow crevice, where she had plucked away a small stone. And this was just at twilight, as she could see by the grey dimness which poured into the outer cellar through the glass window which lighted it. She took a hasty glance while it was yet light, to see how she could manage, when she got into the next room, to get into the street, and, while she was looking, got a glimpse of a pair of stout legs descending a ladder on the left, and as they were surmounted or rather surrounded by a set of exceedingly dirty petticoats, she rightly conjectured that they belonged to the old man's daughter—'Arriet.' The said feminine came down to fill a decanter from one of the casks in the cellar, and as Lize listened carefully to the manner in which

she returned and the sound made by the closing door at the head of the ladder, she was satisfied that it was only an ordinary trap-door, shutting down from above without locking.

The small window, level with the street which fronted the cellar, seemed to be the only other outlet, but Lize was not daunted by the difficulties which lay before her. She felt as if all would be over when once she had made her passage through the wall, and with renewed energy she worked on, only pausing now and then to wet her feverish lips with a sip of water.

Darkness closed in, and though she could no longer see the light in the next apartment, she could feel that every exertion served to increase the size of the aperture. She knew that she had but little time to spare, and though the pain of her wounded hands was intense, she kept on until the sound of the trap-door moving above her warned her to be on her guard.

'Ello, hold gal!' cried Jack Circle, from above, 'ow're you gittin' on jist habout now?'

'When 're you going to let me out?' asked Lize, by way of a response to his question.

'Jist when we're ready, and not afore!' said Jack.

'Oh, don't hurry yourself,' said Lize, carelessly, 'I'm very comfortable now since you gave me something to eat.'

'S'pose you are—you wouldn't like summat vet, eh?'

'I shouldn't wish to give you so much trouble,' replied Lize.

'The trouble hisn't so much, Lize—you seem to take things so heasy now, I don't mind sendin' you down a little suthin'; if you'll honly come hinter reason, I'll let you hout o' that in the mornin', maybe we'll want the place to stow haway swag in!'

'Thank ye, for nothing,' muttered Lize, but the old man did not hear her. He had gone to bring her 'summat vet.'

'Ere it is, old gal,' said he, a moment after lowering down a small bottle of brandy. 'I'll fling ye down a blanket bye 'n' bye—you must a 'ad a 'ard berth on't last night.'

'Shouldn't wonder if I had!' replied Lize, taking the bottle from the string, at once uncorking it and taking a sip of its contents.

Jack made no reply, but shut down the trap again, leaving her, as we must for the present, in the company of the brandy bottle.

Very questionable company, we hear a Crotonian reader say—questionable it may be, *spirited* it certainly is, and if of the quality usually vended at the fashionable '*dispensaries*' in Gotham, we have no hesitation in pronouncing it *evil*, or *bad*, confoundedly *bad*, if you like the word better. Liquor-

dealers and milkmen must think themselves privileged characters in our city ; they certainly are a sinful class, for they seem to make it a point never to deal in anything *pure*.

CHAPTER IV.

CHARLES MEADOWS was in the same upper room where Carlton had held his former interviews with him. It was afternoon. Wine and food were on the table. Though he had drank freely of the former, his face was ashy pale, and his whole appearance indicated that of a person struck with a deathly sickness.

Sam. Selden was seated near him, but he looked as composed and comfortable as ever, and very deliberately sipped his wine, now and then raising the glass between his eye and the window to admire its rich colour.

'That is great wine !' said the gambler. 'Carlton never gets it out except upon extraordinary occasions. He bought it of Osborn—a half-pipe imported on trial. It was too expensive for the general run of customers, but Carlton took a fancy to it, and where he takes a fancy, money is uncounted.'

'What time is it ?' asked the clerk, gloomily, not heeding Sam's panegyric upon the wine.

'Seven minutes after four, precisely,' replied Selden, glancing at his watch.

'What time will it be dark ?' continued the clerk, without raising his eyes, which were gloomily fixed on the table.

'About seven, that is twilight, it will not be really *dark* before half-past.'

'Only three hours !' muttered the clerk, with a sigh. 'Only three hours. My God, how time flies to-day !'

'It's been rather heavy on my hands,' said Sam., carelessly ; 'I've not even taken my customary stroll along Broadway, to see the fashions. I wonder if I haven't been missed by some of the dem'd fascinating promenaders, who're there as regular as the sun shines, to see and be seen.'

The cogitations of Selden were cut short by the entrance of Carlton, who cried :

'Well, boys, how're you passing the time—find that wine rich, eh ?'

'The wine is demnition good !' replied Selden ; 'but our friend Charley seems to be in the dumps—it don't wake him up.'

'Come, come, Meadows, cheer up. Take another glass—there's no use in being dumpy ! Everything is fixed now,' said Carlton.

At the same time, he put a small pistol case down upon the table, and, taking a pistol from it, added :

‘See there ! I’ve just been cleaning that little beauty, and loading it up. I’ll bet it’ll go off as clear as a rocket.’

Meadows looked at the weapon, and shuddered, but did not speak.

‘What’s the matter, Charley, you’re not going to flunk out, are you ?’ asked Carlton, noticing the shudder.

‘No, sir,’ said the clerk, in a tone so quick, deep and harsh, that Carlton involuntarily started, ‘No, sir ; I shall do *my* part, be ready to do *yours*.’

‘Certainly, my dear fellow, but you needn’t scare a man to death. Come, take a glass of wine, and compose yourself.’

‘I will drink no more,’ replied the clerk, gloomily, taking up the pistol, and handling it in a manner so careless, that it alarmed Carlton, toward whom it was accidentally pointed.

‘Look out there, Charley—be careful how you handle that weapon,’ he cried ; ‘it’s loaded to go off.’

‘So I suppose ; but you needn’t fear, it’ll not go off before the time—seven, half-past seven, it’ll be dark, then,’ replied the clerk, in the same calm and gloomy tone.

‘Yes, that’ll be about the time—did you go over the ground and see how it lay ?’

‘Yes !’ replied the clerk.

‘Don’t you think my plan is well laid ?’ continued Carlton.

‘Yes !’ said Meadows, without raising his eyes from the weapon which he held.

‘If you follow it in every particular there will not be the slightest danger. After you are clear, go home quietly, and go to sleep.’

‘Sleep ! ha ! ha !’ wildly laughed the clerk. ‘I expect to sleep *very* sound—don’t *you* ?’

‘Just as usual. You make a great deal more of this matter than I would,’ replied the gambler.

‘Oh, no, I consider it a trifling thing. It is *only a murder* !’ replied the clerk, in a bitterly sarcastic tone.

‘Have you tried on the dress, yet ?’ asked Carlton, wishing to alter the tone of the conversation.

‘Yes.’

‘Does it fit ? Can you move easily in it ?’

‘Well enough !’ responded the clerk, moodily.

‘Well, then, all is fixed—there will be nothing to prevent its success. But you must go home at once, after the work is done—and then go to your store in the morning as usual ! This will be necessary, to avoid exciting suspicion. You’ll have to keep your ears open, and your lips shut too, after it is all over. I shall have some trouble—but nothing can be *proved* against me, the whole affair’ll blow over in a week or two.’

The clerk made no reply, but sat with his head bent down, gazing upon the pistol as he had before.

'This is dull, really; Sam., join me in a glass of wine,' said Carlton, who in spite of his assumed indifference and calmness, felt more and more nervous, as the hour of his purposed revenge approached.

When the two had filled their glasses, Carlton again spoke to Meadows.

'You'd better take another glass of wine, Charley,' said he.

'Give me some brandy—let it be strong as *fire*,' said the clerk, sternly.

'Why, you don't mean to get drunk? That would never do.'

'*Drunk*,' repeated the young man in a bitter tone. 'You've not liquor enough in your house to make me drunk *now*. I am weak, I want brandy to strengthen me.'

Carlton went to a cupboard, in a corner of the room, took a sealed bottle out of it, and, after brushing away the dust, drew the cork.

'There,' said he, as he put it before Meadows, 'is some that's older than either of us. It was bottled in 1801—I got it of Rachau in '40!'

Meadows made no reply, except by pouring out a tumbler half full of it, and drinking it down raw.

In a few minutes it seemed to have produced an effect—his cheeks, lately so pale, flushed up—his eyes sparkled, and rising from his chair, he paced to and fro across the floor with a firm, quick step.

Carlton looked at him anxiously—he feared that the liquor had been too strong, and would disable the clerk from his purposed deed. Meadows saw the look—divined its meaning. Smiling, he said:

'You need not fear me now—it was just what I wanted—I *was* weak in heart and body—but I'm all right now!'

'I'm glad of it,' replied Carlton. 'The hour is near—but you must remember all the directions.'

'You need not fear me now. Though flushed, I am calm and strong,' replied Meadows.

'Suppose you put on the dress, and let me see how you look!' said Carlton.

'Certainly!' replied the clerk, proceeding to put a woman's frock on over his other clothes. Taking off his cap, he put that in his pocket, and then put on a common bonnet, which was covered with a green veil. The dress which was perfectly loose at the waist, so as to be easily taken off, was covered by a large shawl, and the disguise was finished.

'How do I look?' asked the clerk, as he stepped mincingly across the room, endeavouring to imitate the inimitable walk of woman.

'Capital! Very like a lady—but not much like my wife!'

said Carlton. 'But you'll do! You saw the place where you was to throw in the dress?'

'Yes!'

'Have you the lead attached to it?'

'Yes; and to the shawl and bonnet! I'll see that they're put out of sight—they'll never *rise* against me!'

'Well, then, all will be right—but be careful that you're not observed on the dock!'

'Oh, never fear. It will be quite dark when I get down there,' replied Meadows.

'So it will—and here it is, after *five* already. I must go and see my wife. Sam'll keep you company till I come back,' said Carlton, and passing through into his wife's apartments, he left them together, as we must also do, for the present.

CHAPTER V.

'I BELIEVE we'll soon have that villain Genlis in our power, Annie!' said Mr. Abingdon, as he entered his wife's sitting-room, a short time after the date of our last scene there.

'How, dear Edward? tell me!' quickly responded the anxious wife.

'Why, when I went to our good friend M—— and told him all of the circumstances, he at once started out with me to visit the various Hack stands, to see if we could not find the driver who had taken you to the house of Genlis.

'We went to the stand at the Park—to that in Chatham Square, and to several of the largest stables, but found no team corresponding to the one you described, nor any coach with the tassel mutilated. We had almost given up the hunt in despair, when M—— remarked that sometimes a coach or two was to be found at the bottom of Hudson Street and West Broadway. We hurried down there, and sure enough a coach was there, with a team answering your description.

'The moment M—— glanced at it, and saw the driver, he said, "that we were on the right clue." The owner of the hack, it appeared, was a fellow very appropriately called "Dirty-faced Jack," but he was not with the hack at the time, one of his hands, Mr. Terrence O'Grady, being in charge of the vehicle.

'Terrence knew the magistrate in a moment, and when he saw us stop and examine his coach, he started off at a run, intending to make himself "scarce" as they say in the West. But M—— gave chase and overhauled him in a moment.

'“Och! yer honer is intirely mistaken! I was only goin' afther my dinner!” replied Terrence.

“Your dinner, at this time of day, you scoundrel? Why it’s five o’clock!” said M——.

“But, yer honer, Biddy has got to be very fashionable, o’ late times! We always git our praties an’ beef at five!” responded Terrence.

“Ah, very well. We’ll take a look in your carriage!” said M—— opening the hack door, and looking at the tassels hanging by the side.

“They were the same colour of the cord we had, and we at once detected the place where you had cut it off. So, you see, Annie, that little thoughtless act has turned out to be greatly serviceable!”

“Thank Heaven!” replied the young wife—“but go on, Edward, and tell me the rest!”

“When we found by the tassel that we had the right coach, M—— turned to Terrence, and said in a stern, harsh tone:

“You’ve been carrying on a nice business, haven’t you?”

“I’ve never done anythin’ that my masther didn’t bid me to!” replied the fellow.

“Then he told you to do all this work for Genlis, eh?”

“At the name of Genlis, the fellow’s confidence forsook him entirely.

“Och, botheration take ’em all! I told ’em it ’ud come to this!” he cried, and then turning to M——, he added:

“For the love o’ heaven an’ all the saints, Mr. M——, do let me off this wonst! I’ll quit drivin’, and nivr another box ’ll I sit on, till I go to my own funeral!”

“There’s only one way to get out of the scrape, and you may choose between that and cutting stones in Sing-Sing!” replied M——, sternly.

“Then spake it out, yer honer—an’ it’s myself, Terrence O’Grady, that ’ll do yer biddin’ ony day, rather than look inside o’ the grey walls. Faith, the outside on ’em looks worse ’an the small-pox!” said Terrence, pale with fear.

“You’ve got to tell me where this Geulis lives, and at the same time say nothing to put him or your dirty-faced master on their guard!”

“Faith, yer honer, that’s all as asy as prayin’; the ould Gipsev don’t live a dozen blocks from yer honer’s office. It’s round in W—— Street!”

“Don’t tell a falsehood! Why did you drive so far, if the place is so near!”

“Caze, it was orders. I druv around up one street and down another, so’s to make the visitors believe he lives in the counthry. He has a man that meets ’em where I laves ’em, an’ walks ’em round his garden, an’ all that, so the craturs git turned round an’ round, till they forgit everythin’!”

“But to make the story short, Annie, M—— and myself found out all that we wanted from the hackman, and he is

bribed and frightened completely into our service. To-night M—— will surround it with a party of policemen. You will soon hear from your boy, I hope, for M——, and I will force the secret out of this villain, and see what his magic is made of !”

‘But he might, in revenge, destroy our child, if he is yet living !’

‘No ; hemp is too cheap here for him to dare that. Our plan is well laid, and it cannot fail. But you will have to take a share in it.’

‘What part, my husband ?’ asked the wife.

‘You will go to Julia, as you have done before, and tell her that you must see Genlis again. Offer the usual fee, and the carriage will doubtless be sent as before. M—— and myself wish to catch this Genlis in his mummery, it may be of use in recovering our Willie.’

‘But will you be near me ? I should be afraid of that Genlis, if I were alone with him, and he knew that I had told of him !’

‘You need not fear—I shall be near. Now go to Julia the Indian woman, and tell her you must see Genlis again—that you will pay his usual fee. We’ll make him disgorge the money soon enough.’

‘I will do as you wish, dear husband. Oh, I pray God that we may get back our boy !’

‘I will, Annie. we will—be hopeful. I feel confident now that we are on the right track !’

CHAPTER VI.

THE grey of twilight had deepened the shadows, and drawn its misty veil over the city. The streets were crowded by poor sewing and binding girls, who, having worked as long as they could see, were now hurrying homeward, wearied in body and spirit, for where the labour is ill paid for, the spirit may not be glad.

At this hour, Charles Meadows, closely veiled and disguised as a woman, passed out from the dwelling of Henry Carlton, and walked slowly along through back streets towards the central part of the town.

In a few moments after, Mrs. Carlton left the same house, and with a hurried, tremulous step, passed on up Broadway.

Her time and pace was so well suited with that of Meadows, that when she passed the corner of the street which intersected Broadway, near the place of Cooly, she saw the tall figure of the disguised clerk cross the street before her, and take up his appointed position in the shaded niche of a closed-

up door-way, a short distance down the cross street, to the right.

Her duty had already been given to her. She passed on to the saloon of the fated Cooly, and it seemed that he expected her, for he stood at the door, whistling a careless air.

She beckoned him out to her, and he advanced to her side.

'Good evening, Hannah,' said he, in his usual tone. 'Are you well to-night? You seem to be all in a tremble!'

'I have cause to tremble, Charles. I am sick at heart, and wretched. Will you walk a little way with me? I would talk to you.'

'Yes; but I cannot spare many minutes. I expect some friends every moment, whom I promised to meet.'

'You need not spare *many* minutes—it will not take long!' said the woman, in a deep, unnatural tone. 'I have only a few questions to ask, and you can answer them as we walk on. We'll just step round the corner of the next street. It is dark there now, and we can talk unobserved!'

'That's true, my dear; but what questions did you speak of?'

'The most important is this. Why have you deserted me after blasting my name and rendering me an unhappy, wretched creature?'

'Why, the fact is, Hannah, you know as well as I do, that we were doing wrong, and I thought the best way was to drop our intimacy.'

'Why did you not think of the *wrong*, before you drew me away from my husband's side?' exclaimed the woman bitterly.

'Why, my dear, to tell the truth, I didn't think it was wrong just then, myself.'

'No, not until you was tired of my society—satiated with my poor beauty. Like the ungrateful bee, you deserted the flower as soon as it had lost the honey of novelty. And now I suppose you'll seek some other helpless female, and damn another soul into eternal misery and infamy!'

'Poh, Hannah, you are running romance into the ground.'

'There is more reality in this business than romance, sir,' said the woman sternly.

'Very well, my dear, have it your own way: but if you have anything more to say, be quick—I've no time to spare.'

'Very little, I acknowledge,' said Mrs. Carlton, stopping on the side walk, in the dense shadow of the tall house before them. In the deeper shadow of the old door-way, she could see a dark object standing motionless. It was not five steps from where she was standing. Not a breath could be heard from him, yet it was Charles Meadows, upon his post.

Mrs. C. had so arranged Cooly that his back was directly

toward this spot, and she now paused to say a few words to the victim, ere she gave the signal for his death.

‘I have but little to say, Charles,’ she continued, ‘and what I have to say, is the last I have to utter to you in this world.’

‘Then it’ll be short and sweet,’ said he laughingly.

‘Charles said she in a solemn tone, ‘this is no time for you to *jest*!’

‘Well, well. Go on, and say what you have to say quick!’

‘Then hear me. You won my love at a time when I fancied myself neglected by my husband. I gave you a fond and disinterested love—would have died to save you from pain and trouble.’

She paused a moment, but Cooly made no response, and she went on.

‘When we separated the last time—I told you if you cast my love from you to beware of my *hate*!’

‘So you did; but you needn’t talk of hating me, Hannah, after the happy hours we’ve spent together.’

‘Hush, sir, hush!’ cried the woman huskily. ‘Dare not to speak of them. I now *hate* you—stop, you must not move yet. It is not quite time—I’ve a few more words to say.’

Unwillingly, Cooly paused and listened, and at the same moment the dark shadow in the back ground slowly and cautiously moved from its position.

The woman went on.

‘Yes, Charles Cooly, I have fondly, deeply, madly *loved* you, and now, all as madly do I *hate* you. I have come here to take my last farewell of you!’

‘Well, Hannah, I’m agreed—let’s kiss, however, and part friends.’

‘Ha, ha!’ she cried, with a wild laugh, ‘Judas betrayed with a kiss, so will I!’

The shadow of the murderer was over them, as the victim bent down and met the woman’s kiss; then in the very second after, she sprung one step aside, and said:

‘*It is time.* Good bye, Charles Cooly!’

At the same instant, a blinding flash of light illumined the darkness—a quick, sharp report was heard, and as she turned and fled with bird-like speed down the street, Charles Cooly tumbled forward upon the pavement, with a bullet in his brain. The murderer, Charles Meadows, dropped the pistol beside the corpse, and with hurried steps crossed Broadway, and dashed down the street beyond.

‘Go it, girl. Let your legs do their duty!’ cried a couple of careless persons, passing up Broadway, who saw as they supposed, only some unhappy courtesan, who had got in a scrape.

They might easily have stopped him—but he rushed on, leaving a terrible scene of excitement behind him, for in a

moment the body of Cooly was discovered by persons rushing to the spot, attracted by the report of the pistol.

Meadows stopped at a little dark alley, a short distance down the street, and quickly divested himself of the female apparel, which he hurriedly tied up in a small bundle. He then passed rapidly down to the North River, and in ten minutes from the moment when he fired the pistol, the female dress was sunk in the muddy waters of the river.

One would think, that having done this much towards his security, and having been unfollowed, and passed unquestioned so far, he would be less agitated than at first. But it was not so. When he hurried along an unfrequented street, toward his mother's house, his limbs trembled beneath him—he was ghastly pale, sick at heart and in body. The peculiar excitement which had sustained him until the deed was done, had now failed him, and a very hell of terror and remorse was raging in his bosom.

As fast as he could, he rushed along till he reached his mother's door, and just as his foot touched the door step, the door opened, and a blaze of light, from the hall-lamp, almost blinded him.

'Here he is!' cried the voice of a man, in the entry, 'here he is at last.'

Charles was so terrified, that he could not even fly, though he thought that the officers of the law were before him. With a bitter groan of agony, he sunk fainting upon the threshold.

'What is the matter, my son?' asked his mother, bending over him, anxiously, then turning to the person who had spoken first, she added:

'Do help me in with him. The poor boy is sick—he has a fit or something.'

'Yes, ma'am—you jist stand aside a bit, I'll lift him up, and tote him in! Why, what's the matter, Charley?' cried the young man.

'Who are you? Are you not an officer?' asked the clerk, raising up his head with a wild, quick glance.

'An ossifer? Well, that's rich! No; don't you know me, Charley? I'm *Mose*—your old school-mate, *Mose*!' and as he spoke, the young man lifted the clerk up, and helped him into the house.

'Did you hear of it so soon?' continued the clerk, looking stupidly at *Mose*.

'Hear of it? The poor creetur told me of it herself, this mornin', and I've been a lookin' for you all day, to go with me, and my crowd, to help her out o' the muss.'

'Her? What do you mean? It was a *man* that I——'

'A man!' interrupted *Mose*—'No, 'twas your own sister

'Bell. I seen her this mornin' out o' old Ma'am Sweet's winder—see here, she drapt this into my cart.'

Meadows looked at the paper which Isabella had written that morning, and then while he grew more pale, if possible, than before, he asked in a choked and husky voice :

'Did you say you saw her ?'

'Yes,' replied Mose, 'and I told her to hold on till night, that we'd be there—and now I'm ready to go *in*, Charley. Me and Sikesey—he's jist round the corner, with four or five more that runs with our machine. We've got a gallus machine now, Charley—it's been to the shop, and looks jist like new.'

'Do hurry off, and rescue your sister, from that dreadful place, Charles !' cried Mrs. Meadows. 'My dream has come true.'

'Yes, both of them ! *both* of them, mother !' cried the clerk, wildly.

She gave one searching look at him—his very manner seemed to answer her, and she screamed :

'Oh, holy God of Heaven, if it is so, I shall go mad.'

She comprehended in a moment, why he had taken Mose for an officer.

'Leave us alone, for one minute !' she cried, to Mose—'leave us alone for one minute—I must talk to him.'

'Sartinly, ma'am !' said Mose,—'he'll find me and Sikesey at the corner, and I hope he'll not be long a comin'.'

'No, I will be there in a minute,' said Meadows.

The next moment mother and son were alone.

'What is it, Charles, you have to tell me ? You said both my dreams had come true !'

'Yes, if my sister is ruined, they have !' said the young man, hoarsely. 'It is not an hour since I killed a man !'

'Killed !' shrieked the mother. 'Oh, my God, what will we come to ? Was it this Whitmore ?'

'No, no ! I wish it was ! His time is yet to come—my hand is in now, and there is no use for me to stop !'

'God have mercy on me ! I shall go mad !' groaned the mother.

'You must keep still, mother ! If you hear of a man being shot to-night, you must not say a word. No one knows that *I* did it ! I did not mean to tell you—but I could not help it !'

The mother was too much shocked to reply. She burst into tears. Charles could not endure her misery. Begging her, for his sake, to be calm and silent, he hurried out to seek Mose and his party, and with them, to search after his ill-fated sister.

One glance at Mrs. Carlton, before we close this chapter. When she heard the report of Meadows' pistol, she did not wait to see the wretched victim fall—she did not dare to turn

one glance that way, but rushed down the street and turned the next corner, with all the speed which terror could give to her agile limbs. Breathless, and trembling in every joint, she reached the door of her husband's house.

He was there, awaiting her.

'Is it done?' he asked.

'Yes, oh, God, yes!' she gasped, and would have fallen upon the threshold, had he not caught and steadied her.

'Be calm, Hannah, be calm. Everything depends on our mutual self-possession, now!' he said. 'I know we will be suspected—the officers will doubtless soon be here—hurry up and change your dress, hide your shoes, there is mud on them. I must go into the faro-room. It will not do for me to be absent a moment!'

With a strong effort, the wife recovered herself and hurried to her room, when she instantly locked herself in, while Carlton took his place at his faro-table again.

As he expected, in a few moments the police entered his room, and he was told that he was a prisoner.

'For what, gentlemen?' he asked, in apparent surprise, knowing of course, that *here*, in this most *moral* city (God forgive me for that lie!) he never would be arrested for mere gambling.

The officers would not tell, but closely searched his person, and examined him from head to foot. He was unarmed. His boots were clean, the blacking unsoiled and bright. He evidently had not been out in the muddy streets.

'Have you been here all the evening?' asked the magistrate, who headed the party.

'Yes, sir. I believe I have not been out of the house since dinner!' said the gambler, calmly.

'What is the time?' asked the same officer.

'Eight, nearly; it wants eleven minutes, by the clock on St. Paul's; I noticed at seven, when the clock struck, that my watch was ten minutes too slow. I remarked it, did I not, Sam?'

'Yes, sir, I believe you did!' replied Selden, to whom Carlton had spoken.

The magistrate eyed Selden very closely, but both these persons were so perfectly calm, that his sagacity was put completely at fault.

'Is your wife at home?' asked the magistrate.

'I presume so!' replied Carlton. 'She would not be likely to go out on such an evening! I will go and see, if you wish.'

'No, sir, stay here for the present, under charge of one of my officers. If you will call a servant, and permit me to be shown to her rooms, I will be obliged to you!' said the magistrate.

‘Certainly, sir; but this conduct is *very* singular,’ replied Carlton.

‘It may be, but it is *necessary*!’ replied the magistrate, sternly.

Carlton sent a black waiter after Eliza, Mrs. C.’s waiting woman.

‘Eliza,’ said Carlton, when she made her appearance, ‘is your mistress in?’

‘Yes, sir, I s’pect so. She was unwell all the afternoon, and has been locked in her room all the evening,’ replied the mulatto woman.

‘Show me to her room, instantly!’ said the magistrate, sternly.

Then bidding two of his subordinates remain in charge of Carlton, and not permit him to hold communication with any one, the officer followed Eliza up stairs.

The door of Mrs. Carlton’s room was locked, but after some difficulty it was opened, and Mrs. C. appeared in a loose undress, with no signs about her of having been in the street. She was pale, and very much agitated, and when asked what was the matter, only replied, that she was sick, and had been so all day. She acted her part far less calmly than her husband had done—but still she succeeded so far, as to put the officers of the law completely at fault.

They had already learned, that a woman had been seen with Cooly but a moment before his body was found—they had learned, that immediately after the report of the pistol was heard, a woman was seen to cross Broadway very hurriedly, and as it was publicly known that she had been intimate with Cooly, and that her husband’s jealousy and anger had been aroused, suspicion at once pointed her out as an accomplice in the murder, if not indeed the murderer. But there was no sign to sustain the suspicion—no proof to fix the crime upon her, or her husband.

CHAPTER VII.

It was an unfortunate thing for poor Isabella, that Mose turned his cart around, and went back to ask her if she was not ‘Bell Meadows.’ He was seen and overheard, by Madame S.

‘So, ho!’ muttered the woman, after he had passed, ‘the bird thinks she can get out of the cage. I’ll have to clip her wings.’

The wretch instantly called her cook.

‘Make a nice breakfast for the girl in the garret,’ said she. ‘Some strong coffee, mutton chops and the like, and bring it to me, I’ll carry it up myself.’

The breakfast was soon prepared, and brought up to the

landlady, who went to a private cupboard, and brought a phial, from which she poured a drug into the coffee.

Isabella was seated at the table reading the Bible, when Madame S. went in. She shuddered, as she looked at the hag, but did not move from her seat.

'I've brought you some breakfast, my girl!' said the landlady, more kindly than she had spoken before. 'I'm sorry I was so harsh just now, but I've such a set here, they'd put a saint out of patience sometimes. Do eat a little, I know you must be hungry.'

'Thank you, I cannot eat!' replied Isabella, tearfully, 'but if you'll give me a glass of water, I'll thank you.'

'Wont coffee do as well—there's some that's nice and strong!' said the woman.

'I could not swallow it—I only want a little water,' said the young girl, who did not suspect that the coffee was drugged.

'Well, I'll get you some!' said the old woman, and she again left the room, locking it as usual behind her.

She again went to her cupboard, for she was prepared even for this wish of Isabella's. She took a paper which contained a small white powder, and putting about a teaspoonful into a glass nearly full of water, added a little sugar, and then cut a lemon, and squeezed some of the juice into it.

'That'll take away the taste!' she muttered, and hurried again to the garret.

'I made some nice lemonade—it's so cooling, and allaying to thirst!' said she, as she entered.

Isabella's lips were parched with fever, and she drank it off in a moment, without a thought of its contents.

'I'll leave the breakfast—you may want it by and bye!' said the woman, with a smile; and then she left Isabella alone.

'It will soon be night,' murmured the wretched girl, 'and then I hope and pray God that I shall be rescued from here.'

She continued to read on—but she became sleepy in a little while, and still without a thought of the cause of her sudden drowsiness, she laid down upon the bed, and went into a sound sleep.

In a few moments Madame S. returned, and smiled as she saw how well her potion had operated.

Calling a servant, she and the negress lifted the poor girl from the couch, and carried her down into a small cell in the back part of the cellar of the house, which was sunk into the ground beyond the regular cellar wall, and closed by a secret door, which never would be observed by a careless searcher.

'The devil couldn't find her, now,' said the landlady, with a satisfied tone; 'her friends may come as soon as they like!'

Isabella was indeed in a dangerous situation now. She was beyond the aid which she had solicited, and which had been

promised her—she was entirely in the power of one who would sell her own *soul* for gold, and who cared less for the virtue of her sex, except as a matter of trade, than she did for the clouds that swept across the sky.

We will at once pass over the time intervening between that hour and night, and introduce a new scene to our readers.

Maddened by his own remorse, as well as the thought that his sister was in a den of prostitution, and had probably been ruined, Charles Meadows, with Mose and his party, reached the door of the house where she was confined.

The first intimation Madame S. got of their arrival was by the ringing of the bell, and the voice of Mose. She hurried to the door, and asked in her usual tone, what was wanted.

‘We’re jist payin’ you a friendly wisit, Ma’am, that’s all; let’s in, will ye?’ said Mose.

‘Certainly,’ replied the ‘she boss,’ opening the door readily; ‘what can I do for you, gentlemen?’

‘You can jist show us the way up to your upper story with a candle, and be hasty about it, you thievin’ old catamaran!’ replied Mose, planting himself firmly in the hall.

‘I’d like to know what you want to do in my fourth story, or garret?’ said Ma’am S.

‘We only want a gal that you’ve got stowed away there, you everlastin’ lump o’ sin!’

‘There’s no one there!’ said the woman, quietly.

‘What! D’you go for to say that ‘Bell Meadows, Charley Meadows’ sister, he that’s here alongside o’ me, aint up there?’

‘There was a Miss Meadows slept there with her beau last night, but she’s gone away with him to-day!’ replied the haridan.

‘Looke, old woman, that’s gass,!’ cried Mose. ‘We’ve come here after that same little gal, and you’ve got to show her up, or we’ll down with your rascally old crib, that’s all!’

‘You may look the house over, from top to bottom!’ replied the landlady, indignantly. ‘As I said before, there was a Miss Meadows slept here last night with her beau, but they both went away, about dinner time!’

‘Gas! Let’s search the house!’ cried Mose, and in a moment, all of his party, except two, whom he told to look out for the door, were scattered about the house, searching every apartment. The garret was found empty, and of course the search was in vain, though they looked from the roof to the cellar.

Charles Meadows was fearfully excited. He knew that his sister had been there—the note which Mose had received told how unwillingly—and now he knew not where to look for her. His imagination painted her agonizing misery—his heart was full of remorse and wretchedness—it was a burning hell within a hell.

'What was the name of the man that brought her here?' he asked, as, after the vain search, he confronted the wretch who kept the house.

'He didn't give any name—he was a foreigner !' replied the woman, boldly.

'Are you sure it was not Whitmore or Livingston? Speak, you hag, or I'll murder you !'

'No; he was not an American, he was a Spaniard, I think !' replied the woman, undaunted by his wild and haggard looks and threatening tone.

'Where did they go to?—Did she go unwillingly?' continued the wretched brother.

'I don't know where they went. She went away willingly enough, more willing than she came !'

'God of Heaven, she is ruined !' moaned the brother.

'Then the old crib shall pay for it !' shouted Mose, and as he spoke, he raised a mahogany chair and dashed it into a large pier glass which fronted the parlour.

'Go in, boys—let the she boss suffer; but don't hurt the gals !' he continued. 'Go in, Sikesey, don't be afeard !'

'Watch, murder ! help !' shouted the landlady, as she saw her best furniture dashed into pieces. But no watch came; rows were too common in that neighbourhood for them to notice, and in less than the time we take to tell the story, Ma'am S. saw every window in her rooms broken—her sofa-cushions cut up—chandeliers dashed into atoms, chairs crushed down in a heap in the middle of the floor.

'There's no use in stayin' here, Charley !' said Mose, when the furniture was nearly all demolished—'your poor sister aint here—but we'll look round the whole row of wimmen shops, till we find her !'

Meadows was nearly delirious. He was fit then for any deed. Murder would have been but pastime to him.

'Have you any idea who it was that took her there?' asked Mose, when he stood in the street once more.

'No, not without it was one Whitmore—but I heard he was laid up with a broken arm and head—he got into a row in Broadway last night !'

'Maybe 'twas him that I lammed !' said Mose. 'I gave some dandy chap thunder over the cocoa-nut, last night !'

'I must see him !' said Charley, 'he *must* know how my sister came to leave his sister's house !'

'Sartin. Let's go and see what he's got to say about it !' cried Mose. 'Come along, Sikesey—b'hoys, come alo-o-ong !'

CHAPTER VIII.

At last the hole in the cellar wall was large enough for Lize to creep through it. But it was very late before the work was

accomplished. It seemed to Lize, that she had been hours, long weary hours in getting out the last stone—yet it was not quite midnight, when she passed through the aperture, and stood in the outer cellar. She paused here, and took the last sup of liquor which was left in her bottle, and rested a moment to collect her energies for a bold and desperate attempt to escape.

By the noise above her, she knew that were there plenty of old Jack's peculiar customers in the bar-room, and as she must pass through it, this added to her danger. But she felt confident that if she could once gain the street, she would be safe, for they would not dare to pursue her, and even if they did she was as speedy as she was nettlesome.

For a moment she paused to listen, and then ascended the stair-case or ladder, and put her broad shoulders against the trap door. Something heavy was upon it—but she gave a sudden heave; it yielded, and the next moment she was up in the liquor shop. Without waiting an instant, she leaped over the bar, and before any one could stir to intercept her, she was in the street, running with her utmost speed toward the house of Mr. Precise.

The people in the bar-room were struck perfectly dumb with surprise. This was a performance 'not down in the bill,' and they couldn't comprehend it.

'Arriet' had been standing upon the trap, when Lize hove it up, and in so doing capsized her entirely over the bar, leaving her upon the floor, head down, displaying to an admiring set of thieves and toppers, a pair of red and dumpy limbs, which, like her face, appeared to be decidedly opposed to the 'water cure' system.

Old Jack was in the back room, but startled by the outcry and crash, he rushed into the bar-room only in time to pick up his daughter, and learn that a ghost in petticoats, or something else had pitched 'Arriet' over the counter, and then 'sloped' through the front door.

He quickly stepped behind the bar, and seeing that the trap was open, took a light, and descending, soon discovered the state of affairs.

'Blast the bloody fool!' he cried, as he emerged from the cellar, 'I vos agoin' to let 'er hout in the mornin'! But it vont make much hodds, I reckon—for Jack Murphy, Bill, and the rest of 'em 'ave cleaned hout the hold un's crib afore this!'

Then he took a huge and ancient looking silver watch from his pocket, and glancing around his customers, said:

'It's arter twelve, my chums, jist a minnit, and that's shuttin' hup time, you know. Take vot you want and be off!'

Some of the toppers who were possessed of the 'ready'

took something more to drink, and made their exits; others, who were less fortunate, quietly dropped off, after taking a last lingering glance at the bar and its charms.

When Lize got into the street, she did not stop to learn what damage she had done, either to Miss 'Arriet' or to the establishment—she did not even pause to listen whether she was pursued or not, but hearing the sound of some distant church-clock striking twelve, she rushed wildly on toward the street where Mr. Precise dwelt. Once a watchman attempted to stop her, but she had no time to explain, and settled his anxiety with a blow between the eyes, which left him in a pleasant state of unconsciousness, reposing in the gutter, until she was a long way beyond his precinct.

It seemed as if she could not get along fast enough, though she ran with all her speed, but at last she reached the house of Mr. Precise.

She was about to rush up the steps and ring the bell, when she saw that a basement window was open, and she determined to enter quietly in that way, and if possible to alarm the house, and prevent the thieves, whom she supposed to be inside, from carrying off their plunder.

She quickly entered the window. All was dark and silent within, but having once passed in by the basement, she remembered the course which would lead to the room of Mr. Precise, and silently, breathlessly, hurried on up the first stair-case. But at the head of it she unfortunately stumbled, and in trying to save herself from falling, caught at the baluster of the stair-way, which gave way with a loud crash.

'Damnation—we're nabbed!' cried a hoarse voice, and at the same time a blaze of light from the opened lens of a dark lantern almost blinded her, and she saw by its light four men with black silk handkerchiefs drawn over their faces, who were coming from the back parlour, loaded with plunder.

She could not recognize them, but they knew her, for they all cried out,

'It's big Lize—she's blowed on us!'

Lize screamed loudly for help, and tearing out one of the rounds from the broken baluster, attempted to prevent them from escaping, but the foremost villain, with a bitter curse, rushed upon her, and broke down her guard with a short iron crow-bar, or 'billy,' as the burglars term it, and struck her another terrible blow over the shoulder.

But the heroic girl grappled with him in an instant, and screamed still louder for help. Lights were now seen flashing from above—the house was alarmed, and the villain whom she had grappled with drew a short, heavy bowie knife, and drove it home to the very hilt in her breast, shouting to the rest,

'It's no time for play, grab all you can and run for it!'

Lize felt the keen weapon as it dashed into her very vitals, and with a piercing scream let go her hold, and fell to the bottom of the stairs. The burglars rushed out, trampling upon her as they passed over her form, and in a few moments had fled far away from the spot. Meantime Mr. Precise and Jenny hurried down the stairs, the former carrying a large pistol, which he always kept in his bed-room, though it had never been loaded since he possessed it, and Jenny, armed with the poker, both screaming watch, and robbers !

By the time they had got to poor Lize, a violent ringing was heard at the front door, which proved to be the watchman, who, as is customary in such cases, had arrived a moment too late to do any good. Letting him in, Mr. Precise hurried to the side of poor Lize, and raised her partly up.

'I'm done for,' she muttered, 'but I tried my best to save you !'

'What is it ? why you're dreadfully wounded ! what is the matter !' cried Mr. Precise, nervously, not being able to comprehend the nature of things at all, but seeing that she was bleeding terribly.

'Run for a doctor,' he added, to the watchman—'run as hard as you can !'

'But haven't you been robbed ? Isn't she one of the robbers ?' urged the official, who of 'course,' thought if she was a criminal, that the getting a surgeon would be unnecessary trouble.

'Never mind what she is, go for a doctor—I don't care if I have been robbed, run for a doctor !' cried Mr. Precise, very impatiently.

'You'd better go yourself, sir !' said the watchman, 'I'll stay here to guard the prisoner !'

'To guard one that's dying ! You're a rum copper, you are,' said Lize, faintly, casting a look of scorn upon the officer. Then looking at Mr. Precise, she said :

'You needn't send for any doctor for me. It's all over. When the knife's pulled out, I shall go off ! Do take me up to Angelina, if she's alive yet !'

'Oh, yes, and she's very bad off—but I'd a'most forgotten her in this new trouble,' cried Mr. Precise. 'Oh, dear me, what a terrible time I do have. One poor angel of a creetur dyin' up stairs, and another down here. what shall I do ! Jenny run for a doctor !'

'And call two or three of my mates here ; holler like mad when you git to the corner, and when they come arter you, send 'em here,' added the watchman to the girl, who speedily started upon her errand.

With the aid of the watchman, Mr. Precise now carried poor Lize up stairs, and at her earnest prayer bore her into the room where Angelina was laying. He saw the handle of

the knife which was in her breast, and was about to draw it out, when she cried :

‘No, don’t take it out yet, my life will go with it, and I’m dying fast enough now ! Raise me up so that I can see my cousin.’

‘They did so. There lay the poor sewing-girl, pale as snow, and alas, full as cold. Her eyes were unclosed—but with a dim glare they were turned toward the door-way, as if she had been looking for some one to enter. Her hands were crossed upon her breast, and that breast was motionless.

‘My God, she is dead !’ groaned Mr. Precise, reaching forward and taking hold of one of her small, thin hands.

‘Dead !’ shrieked Lize, ‘*Dead !* Without one parting look or one word for me ! Oh, God, I could have died easier to have spoken one word to the blessed angel !’

‘She was living when I went down stairs !’ said the old man, while the hot tears rained down his cheeks. ‘I didn’t think she could go off so soon. Jenny and me were sitting by her, talking to her, when we heard you scream !’

The watchman turned his face away from the scene—but it was only to hide the tears which also coursed down his weather-beaten cheeks.

‘Raise me up—lay me on the bed by her side—she’s dead now and won’t mind the blood,’ said Lize faintly, ‘I want to kiss her—oh, God, why couldn’t she be spared when there’s so many sinners on earth !’

They laid the wounded woman upon the same bed. How could they refuse her dying request. In a few moments more the doctor and other watchmen came. While the police were engaged in looking at the damage below, and were seeing what the robbers had done, the doctor looked at the wound of Lize. He saw in a moment that she could not live, and told her so, adding that her time was very brief.

‘I’m contented to go,’ she murmured, ‘now that poor Angy has gone—but there’s one thing that troubles me very much.’

‘What is it ?’ cried Mr. Precise. ‘Anything I can do for you I will !’

‘That I might go to heaven with Angy !’ groaned Lize, bursting into tears ; ‘but I know it’s no use for me to think of that—I’ve been too bad—too hellish bad ! Oh, God, have mercy on me !’

Both Mr. Precise and the doctor wept, and the latter in a kindly tone said,

‘A death-bed is a bad place for repentance, my poor woman ; yet with our merciful God there is forgiveness even at this hour !’

‘Oh, God, no ! None for me—such a miserable sinner !’ groaned the wretched creature.

‘Christ forgave the dying thief upon the cross!’ urged the good-hearted physician.

The woman shook her head hopelessly, and then bidding Mr. Precise listen to her, told him of the plan for the robbery, how she had been confined, had dug her way out of the cellar, and then had reached his house, not in time to prevent the robbery, but only to meet her death in the attempt.

The old man listened in silent surprise.

‘Francis didn’t come home last night—all must be true!’ he muttered, when she had finished; ‘and yet I thought he was *such* a good boy and loved his mother so!’

The watchman now came up and begged Mr. Precise to go down and see what he had lost, and leaving the doctor with the wounded woman for a moment, he did so. His little safe had been broken open, its contents were gone, as also sundry articles of plate, wearing apparel, &c. The thieves, however, had been hurried off too soon to make as large a collection as they intended.

But Mr. Precise seemed to care very little for his pecuniary losses. His troubles up stairs called him back, and he again hurried to the side of the dead and dying.

Poor Lize was writhing in the last agony of her wound, listening to a few hasty words of instruction and comfort from the lips of the excellent doctor, who seemed, unlike too many of his profession, to think the soul worth caring for, as well as the body.

Who have better chances for doing moral good?—what class of men is there who can do more good with true piety, than the medical profession?—men who are daily and nightly called to the bedside of the sick and dying; who meet their fellow-mortals in those hours, when death and a future world being close before them, they *must* think of their soul’s welfare.

When Mr. Precise again took the hand of Lize, she was weakening very fast.

‘Raise me up once more,’ she said, ‘I *must* bend over and kiss poor Angy’s lips again. She is an angel—oh, God, if I could but hope to see her in another world!’

It was a piteous sight to see that dying woman cling to the dead girl’s form, and press her lips upon the pale, cold brow.

‘I wish I could be laid in the same grave!’ she murmured.

‘You shall—you have been a brave, noble friend to her and me!’ said Mr. Precise, in broken sobs.

‘No, no!’ murmured the poor woman—‘you must not do it. She is too good and pure. Bury me near her, but not with her; she is an angel—and I—oh, God, what a sinner I am!’

Neither Mr. Precise nor the doctor could speak. The scene was too affecting.

‘Bury her and me in the lower corner, back from the street

of —— church-yard. My mother is buried there—her aunt. I was there yesterday—no, it was the day before, I believe.—Bury us there, but do not put us in one grave—poor Angy is too good to lay alongside of me !

‘Everything you wish shall be done,’ sobbed Mr. Precise.

‘Then I’ve no more to ask. One kiss more, dear Angy !’

She raised herself alone with a convulsive effort, and again kissed the brow of her dead cousin, and took a long look at her thin but beautiful features.

‘Do shut up her eyes !’ she murmured. ‘Let me see them closed before I go off !’

The doctor complied with her request, and then the woman kissed her lips, ice-cold as they were, once again, passionately. She then turned her eyes to Mr. Precise, and in a low tone, said,

‘God bless you, sir, you was very good to *her*. She’ll say a good word for you up above—I know she will !’

Mr. Precise sobbed all the harder while she spoke.

‘Do not cry, sir,’ she said, ‘it is no use. It won’t call *her* back, and it won’t stop me from—’

A groan burst from her lips, and stopped her utterance, for the death pangs were upon her.

‘Good bye !’ she murmured, to Mr. Precise and the doctor, ‘good-bye, gal,’ she added, to Jenny, who stood sobbing at the foot of the bed, ‘good-bye, and don’t lead sich a life as I have !’

Then she seized the hilt of the knife which still remained in her side, and murmuring, ‘God have mercy on my soul !’ drew it out, and died in an instant.

Her last breath was a prayer for mercy. She was a repentant, despairing, yet a pleading sinner. May we not hope for a better fate than eternal misery for her? She had many and grievous faults; yet she had virtues, warm and noble impulses.

Mr. Precise caused their graves to be inclosed carefully with an iron railing. Above the grave of Angelina he had a plain white marble stone raised, with no name upon it, but a winged and smiling angel was sculptured on the snow-white stone. And while he shed tears over her grave, he gave the old sexton some money, and told him to plant flowers there as soon as the spring time came on.

CHAPTER IX.

MRS. ABINGDON made her arrangements for another visit to Genlis, according to the directions of her husband, and after night-fall, at the usual hour, proceeded to Julia’s to meet the carriage.

Mr. Abingdon had already started for the same place, in company with his friend M—— and a large posse of police.

men, who were to be secreted in the neighbourhood, ready to act when called upon.

This time the driver of the hack occupied but a few moments in taking her to her destination—not necessitated to use the 'round about' method any more.

Upon her arrival, he gave the usual signal, and she was led through the same winding ways as before, and finally seated, as she supposed, in the room where she had before met Genlis.

She heard his voice a moment afterward, close by her side.

'For what have you again come to us?' he asked. 'Have you determined to pay the sum I demanded? Am I to take the journey for the child!'

'I know not what to say or do!' replied Mrs. A. 'If you would let me tell my husband——'

'Why, he'd go and consult with some magistrate, and try to get me in trouble! I know what *men* are, well enough. No, no, you must keep my secret to yourself!' replied the Gipsey.

'But you will let me see the picture once more, will you not?'

'Yes, if you so desire it. But 'tis of little use, you have seen it once, and we can show you no more!'

'Then let me once more look upon the same scene!' said Mrs. A. 'You cannot dream how I love that boy—he was named after a dear and noble brother of mine, who is seeking fame and fortune far beyond the ever-heaving sea;—do let me again look upon the picture!'

'You shall,' said the Gipsey.

He then left her for a few moments, and she plainly heard whispering in the upper end of the room. He soon returned, and saying to her:

'Be silent and behold!' took off the shawl which had been bound over her eyes.

The same beautiful figure was kneeling by the curtain, and when Genlis waved his wand the curtain rose, as if moved by magic, and the mirror, with its rolling mists, appeared as before.

When the mists cleared away, Mrs. A. again saw her child, but once more the picture was changed. The child was in a kneeling posture, his little hands crossed upon his bosom, and his sweet face turned toward a clouded and troubled sky.

The back ground was dim and misty; the boy was surrounded by a kind of fog, which rendered even his figure dim and vague.

The curtain had been up scarce a moment, when a slight noise behind him caused Genlis to turn quickly, and he beheld the magistrate and Mr. Abingdon enter the room.

'Curse you, you have betrayed me! You shall never see your child again!' he cried, bitterly, darting a fiery look at

Mrs. A. Then rushing toward the curtain, which dropped instantly, he cried to the person who knelt by it,

‘Back, Inez, back to the trap—quick, or we’ll be nabbed!’

Both himself and the woman sprung behind the curtain, and though Mr. M—— and Mr. Abingdon hurried to the spot and tore down the curtain in a moment, Genlis and his wife had disappeared. Word was quickly passed to the police outside, and a careful watch kept, but no more was seen of Genlis or his wife.

The *magic* of their operations, however, was at once discovered. The mirror, a large plate of glass lined on the inner side with a thin sheet of common white wax, was connected with a very ingenious contrivance, which consisted of a small steam boiler, set in the cellar below, which could convey a current of steam or heated air to the wax in the back of the mirror, rendering it transparent. Through this, whatever pictures, or figures they chose to introduce behind the glass could be seen, and when they wished to dim, or destroy the effect, they had only to apply a current of cold air, blown by a large bellows from an ice-chest also placed in the cellar.

The contrivance was very ingenious, as figures seen through the glass, looked precisely as if they were shown upon the face of a mirror, and the distance at which the deluded visitors were kept, of course prevented them from seeing any small inaccuracies.

Mr. Genlis had apparently done a very large business, for the police found an immense number of lay figures, masks, wigs, dresses and paintings, which had undoubtedly been used to dupe different customers, who came to read their fortunes in the ‘Magic glass.’

The magistrate and Mr. Abingdon were soon satisfied that Genlis had either stolen, or been connected with the thieves who stole little Willie, for the child’s clothes were discovered upon a little lay figure, which was *faced* with a mask painted to resemble him, and surmounted by curls of the same colour as his own hair. It was no wonder then that at a distance, through thick plate glass, and the transparent wax, the excited mother should think that she recognized her child. The clothes were the same he had worn at his disappearance.

Though they soon discovered how Genlis, his wife and their assistants had escaped, they could learn nothing of the child. The fortune-telling gang had been prepared for any interruption, for a passage from their cellar was opened through into a little shop in the street back of their house, which was kept by one of their gang, and all easily made their escape before any efforts could be used to intercept them. Even the person of whom they rented the house had not known their business or arrangements, so quietly and secretly had all been conducted.

Mr. and Mrs. Abingdon were now in a worse fix than ever. They knew that their child, if still living, was in the power of a desperate and profligate crew, and they had good reason to fear that it might now be killed in revenge. The warm-hearted and excellent magistrate could do no more for them than he had; they had no remedy or hope, except to continue in the search for their child; or to recover him by the offer of a large reward.

They took possession of the picture of the school-room, and the little village, in hopes that it might lead them upon some clue to their child; and Mr. A. also determined to give up house-keeping, and to commence travelling through the country in search of the boy.

On the very same night that the house of Genlis was broken up, the dwelling of Mr. A. was entered by burglars, and every dollar of ready money, all his plate, &c. carried away. The robbers did their job so neatly and well, that they did not even disturb Mr. A. and his wife, or the servants, though they had to open an iron safe, and several doors, which had been left locked and bolted when the family retired to rest.

CHAPTER X.

It was not late—not more than nine in the evening, when Charles Meadows started to go to the room of Harry Whitmore, attended by Mose and his party. But as they came near the C—House, they observed a large crowd was assembled around it.

‘Wonder if it’s a fire!’ said Mose—‘the old bell aint a chimin’, and I don’t hear the forty’s out!’

‘No, it’s no fire!’ said Meadows, with a shudder. ‘There’s not enough noise about it!’

He knew but too well the cause of that collection of people, and we can only wonder that he dared to approach that spot—that he had the hardihood, as he did, to enter the very room where the dead man lay, and to look upon his ghastly face. And that was the *first* time he had ever seen it. Carlton had not told him who was the man that he wished killed—the victim had been led to him in the dark, and, blindly, madly, he had slain him.

Mose had entered with Charles, anxious to know what the muss was.

‘Why, Charley!’ he cried, as soon as he looked at the corpse, ‘darned if this ’ere isn’t Charley Cooly, our old school-mate!’

Meadows gazed one moment, then hiding the horrible sight from his eyes with his hands, heaved a deep and heavy groan, one that fairly startled the bystanders.

'Poor feller! Charley's mighty sorry an' so 'm I! If I know'd who did this, I'd *lam* him—I'd lam him 'till he couldn't say a prayer!' cried Mose.

Meadows turned away—he could not bear to take another glance at the corpse—one who in boyhood had joined in the same sports, and had even helped him to learn his hard lessons; for Cooly was several years his senior.

As he turned away, he said to Mose, 'Stay down here, or out at the door, till I go up and see this Whitmore.'

'No, can't stand that, no way!' said the warm-hearted fellow; 'S'pose you should get inter a muss up there! I must go alo—ong!'

'Well, have it so, if you will; but don't bring the whole party.'

'No, I wont,' replied Mose. 'Sykesey, stan' to the door, you an' the rest o' the b'hoys, till me and Charley comes down; but mind, if you hear me yelp, you jist come right in!'

'We wont do nothin' shorter, hoss!' replied Sykesey, and with this assurance, Mose and the clerk went up stairs to the room of Livingston, where, as the reader is already aware, Whitmore lay.

There was a party of young men in the room. They were seated around a centre-table, upon which stood sundry bottles of wine. The young *gentlemen* were engaged in 'a friendly game of poker,' which did not appear to be 'entirely for amusement,' as considerable change lay in small heaps around the board.

On a couch, or French sofa, near the table, engaged in watching the players, lay Whitmore. His head was still bound up, and his arm was in splints, so that he could not join in the amusement. Livingston was amongst the players, as also a hungry-looking, hatchet-faced individual, whose countenance resembled that of a young opossum very much, who was known to his comrades as *the* 'Count 'Lijah.'

The gentlemen started to their feet, as Meadows and Mose entered, and stared strangely, especially at the latter, not knowing what to make of the intrusion.

Whitmore turned slightly pale for a moment, but quickly recovered his self-possession, and said, with a smile,

'Ah, how d'ye do, Charley? Glad to see you!' Gentlemen, my friend, Mr. Meadows!'

'I wish to have a moment's private conversation with you, sir, before I permit you to use the title of "*friend to me*!"' said the clerk sternly.

'Certainly, sir, certainly! Mr. Livingston just take your party out into the next room, for a moment, if you please. Charley has some business with me!' replied Whitmore, perfectly calm in outward looks, though his very heart was frozen as he faced the injured brother, who looked so changed, so

ghastly pale, from the excitement through which he had passed that evening.

‘By the piper what played afore Moses and the bull-rushes—that’s the feller I gived *jessy* to, last night!’ said Mose, aside. ‘He will not want to stick a B’howery b’hoy, afore soon agin!’

The young gentlemen left the room, as requested by Whitmore, who looked at Mose after they had left, and then, glancing at Meadows, asked:

‘Do you wish that young man to remain?’

‘He don’t want nothin’ else!’ said Mose, gruffly: ‘an’ if he did, he couldn’t help his self.’

‘Well, sir, I will hear your *business*, if business has brought you here. I thought you’d come to *see* a sick friend, merely. I was knocked into a cocked hat by some infernal rascal last night!’

‘Lookkee here, hoss-fly, if you say that ’ere agin, I’ll have to do su’tthin’ that goes against my grain; I’ll have to lam a man that’s on his back a’ready! I lammed you last night—an’ I aint no rascal, and that’s more’n you can say for yourself!’ cried Mose, starting forward to the bed-side of Whitmore, and shaking his huge fist in the invalid’s face.

‘Do not strike him, Mose, he has got some questions to answer to me!’ said Meadows, drawing back the young butcher.

‘I aint agoin’ to hit him, Charley!’ replied the latter, ‘but I don’t like to be called hard names by nobody, and it makes me mussy!’

‘Well, Mr. Meadows, what questions have you to ask?’ said Whitmore, who had begun to flush up a little, at the rather uncomplimentary language of honest Mose.

‘Where is my sister?’ asked Meadows, sternly eyeing the young man.

‘Your sister!’ echoed Whitmore; ‘is she not at home?’

‘No, sir, you *know* she is not!’ said Meadows, sternly.

‘I do not know any such thing!’ replied Whitmore; ‘I got a message from my sister early this morning, saying that her aunt had sent for her up the river, being suddenly taken ill, and that she had to start off in the morning boat. She said your sister had gone home. I hope nothing has happened to her!’

‘Gass! He is a stuffin’ you, Charley!’ said Mose, indignantly.

‘Then you say you know nothing of my sister’s whereabouts. Will you *swear* it?’ asked Meadows.

‘I *will*—so help me God, I have not seen her since early last evening, just before I met you, and I got into the difficulty soon after, which has left me here helpless, as you see me!’ replied Whitmore, earnestly.

‘My God! I know not what to do, or what to make of this affair!’ groaned Meadows.

‘What is the matter, Meadows, *do* tell me?’ said Whitmore, in an earnest tone. ‘Has anything happened to Miss Meadows? For God’s sake tell me!’

‘He cannot know anything of it,’ muttered the clerk, completely deceived by the dissembling villain.

‘Speak—for Heaven’s sake, tell me, has any harm befallen her?’ continued Whitmore, still more earnestly. ‘If there has, tell me—I claim a right to know, even by the feelings which she and I have entertained for each other.’

‘He cannot know it—he cannot be guilty!’ again muttered Meadows to himself, and then he replied to the young man.

‘She has not come home yet, and we are very much alarmed for her safety!’ said Charles, unwilling to let Whitmore know the extent of his fears, and fully satisfied that he at least was innocent.

‘My God, what can have detained her. This is such a villainous place—I wish that I could get about to aid you in your search for her—your friend there did a bad job when he laid me out,’ said Whitmore, in a kind and feeling tone.

‘Maybe, I did!’ said Mose. ‘But you shouldn’t ha’ drawn your stick on me. If you’d hit me with your fist like a man, I’d sarved you out with the same tools, and you’d got off with a black eye, or some other little peculiar mark o’ mine; but when you drew your weapon, I was bound to haul out mine, you know. But if Charley here’s satisfied that you ha’n’t done nuthin’ wrong, I don’t mind sayin’ I’m sorry, an’ makin’ on it up with you. Will you gi’s your hand?’

‘Yes, certainly. I have good reasons on my side, for saying that I’m sorry for *our* difficulty!’ replied Whitmore, shaking the hand of Mose, and at the same time glancing at his own splintered arm.

‘Well, better luck next time, as the gal said when she got a bad husband!’ replied Mose, then turning to Meadows, he added:

‘I say Charley, ha’n’t you got nothin’ agin them fellers that sloped into t’other room?’

‘No,’ replied Meadows, ‘I have not.’

‘Then aren’t we agoin’ to have a muss after all?’

‘No,’ said the clerk. ‘There is no necessity for it.’

‘Then I’m mighty sorry—ha’n’t had no muss, ’cept a little blow out last night, for ever so long—a’most a whole week. An’ fires is so uncommon scarce, jist now—a plug muss is *rich*—I like to go in when I’m at a fire, jist to keep cool.’

‘Let us go. I must continue the search,’ said Meadows.

‘Well, I’ll go long; but I’m so sorry we can’t git a muss!’ said Mose. ‘There was one of them ar fellers what went into t’other room, look sarcy at me, jist as if he thought I’d buy dead hogs and sell ’em, for fresh pork, when they’d died ’cordin’ to onnateral nater, without being stuck, and hung up

like decent pigs is ! I wonder if he didn't want a muss, if he did, he'd only have to say so.'

'Oh, they were all peaceable. They didn't mean to look saucy at you !' said Whitmore.

'Well, if so be you say so, since we're friends, I'll let it slide !' said Mose, 'but how I could lam him, or any other *he* to-night. Charley if we don't find 'Bell to-night, I'm bound to raise a muss somewhere.'

'Then I expect, you'll *have* to raise a muss,' said Whitmore, as the two disappeared, 'for my plans are laid a little to well, to be foiled easily. 'Old ma'am S. knows her business well—and in a few days, I shall be about. I won't be caught quite as easy as that fool Cooly, who lies below stairs now, a victim to his own carelessness. I don't blame a man half so much for getting into a love scrape, as I do for getting caught at it.'

'Have you got clear of him ?' asked Livingston, entering the room.

'Of *course* I have !' said Whitmore, proud of his success.

'But didn't he suspect you ?'

'No, devil the bit. I came the sympathetic and all that over him, and he has gone away to look for his sister, convinced that I know nothing about her. But I'll tell you what I wish you'd do for me, Gus. !'

'What !'

'Why, go 'round to the old woman's in Church street and see how the girl gets along.'

'I've just come from there—I ran around while they were talking to you, and found out that they'd been there already. But they couldn't make anything out of the old woman, she was too keen for them.'

'But where was the girl. Didn't they search the house ?'

'Yes, but Ma'am S. had found out that they were coming, and stowed her away in the vault or coal-hole, I believe.'

'Good ! But what did she tell them ?'

'Why, she said that a Miss Meadows *had* been there with a foreigner—a Spaniard or a Frenchman, she thought, and that she went away with him again about noon to day.'

'Better yet ! why, the old woman is a regular trump. I'll give her an extra hundred for that. She must manage to get the girl to her up town private house for me now, there'll be no danger there, for the house is not much known ; and, besides, it is well arranged for such matters. She's told me some strange yarns about the house ; and if the back-yard was dug into a little ways, it's my private opinion that something strange would be found. *She* didn't exactly tell me so, but I found it out, and I don't believe she'd like to see a spade put into ground there.'

'Why, what do you mean ?'

Oh, nothing much. But there are easy ways of getting money, you know—and the ground is very convenient sometimes to put meat under, which might smell bad if kept above it—but, hush, there comes the count and the rest of 'em. Never say anything about this matter—I got it from one of her girls when she was drunk !'

CHAPTER XI.

ANOTHER day had dawned. Mr. Shirley sat at his breakfast table with their young and beautiful daughter, Constance.

The latter looked unusually well—her cheeks were as rosy as ever, her eyes as bright, but she noticed that both her parents looked pale, sick and care-worn.

She asked them repeatedly, if they were ill, but they told her they were not, and she was left to wonder what could be the matter.

Her father did not even take the Herald up, which the servant had laid beside his plate, though it had formerly been his habit to read the paper always at the breakfast table.

On this morning it was laid within the reach of Constance, and seeing that her father did not touch it, she took it up and commenced reading.

The mother saw her daughter's cheeks flush up a moment after she took up the paper, and noticed that while she read eagerly on, her hand trembled with the paper, and her quick breathing denoted an unusual excitement.

'What is the matter, my child?' she asked—'what excites you so?'

'Oh, mother, here is an account of such a horrible affair !' replied the girl. 'It makes my blood run cold to read it !—What dreadful fiends there are upon this earth !'

'What is it?' asked the mother.

'Why, mother, a poor girl's body has been found in the water, and some of her clothes and marks of a struggle have been found close by the spot at Hoboken, and the paper says some ruffians ruined her there by cruel force, and then threw her in the water ! Oh, how horrible—how she must have suffered—I can't bear to think of it; and then her lover, a worthy young mechanic, has committed suicide ! Oh, mercy, it is too horrible !'

The young girl burst into tears. Her warm young heart was full of sympathy, and as her imagination painted the sufferings of such a horrible death, her tears would come.

'Let me see the paper !' said Mr. Shirley.

He took it from his weeping child, and as his eye fell upon the paragraph, he started, and then turned pale as if death had stricken him. It was well his daughter was sobbing, and had bowed her head down upon the table, else she could not

have failed to notice his agitation. His wife saw it, and silently reached over for the paper. He handed it to her, and she glanced at the paragraph.

It was too much for her. She felt that she could not command her feelings as he had done, and she rose and left the room. She did not say one word—yet there were volumes of reproach in her look as she turned to go from the room, and her glance from him to their daughter, told him that for her alone, the young, pure and beautiful pledge of their early love, she bore with his crime, his terrible wrong.

The paragraph which he had glanced at, was a long account, detailing the finding the body of Mary Sheffield, the beautiful 'Cigar Girl,' and of her supposed ill-treatment and murder by a gang of rowdies at Hoboken.

The story seemed very probable. A place was described where some of her torn garments were found, and where broken bushes, &c. bore the marks of a struggle having taken place; and then in a little slack eddy of the river, close by, her body was found, bearing the marks of violence.

There were marks of violence upon her, not inflicted by a 'gang of rowdies,' but by a hag, a she-devil, an abortion of her own sex, one whom it would be blasphemy to call a *woman*, Caroline L. Sitstill.

Her plan was perfectly arranged. Everything *appeared* to have happened just as the paper stated—but never could the law or its keen-sighted officers find one out of 'the rowdies,' who were *supposed* to have performed the horrible deed.

CHAPTER XII.

THE continued search for Isabella was in vain. Charles Meadows returned to his mother's house at a very late hour, almost delirious with excitement, and found her sick in bed, with a burning fever, raving about her children and the misery which seemed all at once to be settling down upon her hitherto happy household.

When Charles came in and found her thus, he would have instantly gone for a doctor, but he dared not, for her ravings were of the murder, as well as her daughter's supposed abduction and disgrace, and he feared that his own crime might be exposed.

When she saw him, her first inquiry was for her daughter.

'Have you found poor 'Bell?' she asked in a tone of blended anxiety and agony of suspense.

'No, no! I have heard of her, but cannot find her!' said the wretched brother.

'Had she been there in that terrible house, as the young man said?'

'Yes, and went away with her seducer *willingly*, I heard!' groaned the clerk.

'Then may God curse her!' shrieked the mother, 'if she has brought disgrace upon my grey hairs, if she has forgotten the lessons which I have taught her, may God Almighty bend down in his wrath and *curse* her!'

'Mother! mother do not rave so wildly. I do not know this, I only fear it. I heard it from a *thing* who trades in the virtue, not in the vice of her sex, as butchers deal in meat, and regards women according to their youth and fat, alone, as a butcher does the drove which he buys for his slaughter-house.'

'And *she*—my daughter, has been there in the power of this woman?'

'Yes, yes!' rejoined the clerk, with a groan.

'Then *she* is blasted for ever! Now for *you*?' rejoined the mother, sitting up in her bed, and glaring at him with strange looks, such as she never had given him before. 'You, Charles, are a *murderer*? Speak! is it not so?'

The young man blanched before her steady gaze. His lips quivered—his form shook, cold drops of clammy sweat oozed out upon his brow.

'I was a fool to tell you!' he muttered—'I ought to have kept it to myself!'

'Could you have kept from *God*? she shrieked, 'No, no! Your hand is red with the blood of your fellow-man—go forth—go forth, I say, and leave the widow desolate! Son, daughter, both gone—for ever gone!'

'Mother, for Heaven's sake calm yourself!' implored the son. 'You'll rouse the neighbours—they will know our disgrace; for God's sake be calm!'

'Yes, I'll be calm, very calm! I'm going to die—I'm going up to God, where you may *never* come!' continued the mother, in the same wild tone. And then she added:

'Don't you bury me, Charles, your hand is red; and don't let 'Bella come and weep over my grave, for her soul is dark now!'

'Mother, Mother, don't talk so, or I shall go mad!' groaned the clerk.

'Go mad?' she shrieked, 'and wherefore not! Murder is madness, and you're a murderer!'

With a prolonged and terrible shriek, the wretched widow fell back senseless on her bed. Charles thought she was dead. He could not revive her, and careless of risk hastened out for a doctor.

The doctor came, and after hours of exertion, brought her back to consciousness. But Charles had now no reason to fear that she would divulge his dreadful secret. She was a moping,

speechless idiot. Her reason had fled for ever. Her troubles had been too heavy for her strength of mind.

Oh, who can picture the remorse of that son, when he saw the wretch before him. This living murder sunk his *last* crime into insignificance, his heart was a very hell of remorse! Why did he live—why did he not now try the poison, or the deadly steel? Crime had made him a coward, and he dared not! He feared to face the unknown terrors of another world.

CHAPTER XIII.

WHEN Charles Meadows found that his mother's case was hopeless, and that his sister's fate could not be ascertained, he determined to leave the country. On a plea of the sickness of his mother, he had managed for two days to be excused from attendance at his employer's store, and now on the second night after the murder, he repaired to Carlton's house to see him.

What was his astonishment upon meeting the gambler to find himself treated very coldly.

'What is your wish, Mr. Meadows—what can I do for you this evening?' said the gambler, who received the clerk in his private room.

'Money—sir! Money to leave this cursed town!'

'How much, sir; we are very short just now; how much do you want?'

'All you promised me!' replied the clerk, gruffly.

'My promise was made at a moment of great excitement, Mr. Meadows,' said the gambler, coolly, 'and I am now very short of funds—if five hundred dollars will be of any use to you, why I have it at your service.'

'Five hundred devils!' shouted the clerk. 'Scoundrel do you mean to insult me?'

'No, not at all, Mr. Meadows, but you use harsh terms in addressing a gentleman!'

'Do you mean to pay my demands? I want all—every cent you promised me!'

'You cannot have it, sir. I have already given you seventeen thousand, eight hundred and fifty dollars!'

'Liar! You, yourself told me that the money you gave me was counterfeit!' cried the clerk.

'Yes, I *told* you so, but it was to keep you in hand while I wanted you. The money was good, or old S—— would have found it out before now.'

'Villain! Had I known that before, I would have cut my right hand off before I would have done what I have for you!'

'Knowing that, of course, I was bound not to tell you!' said

the gambler, with a sneer, and then he added, 'if you have any more to say, say it quick, I am waited for below.'

'I want five thousand dollars, to-night,' said the clerk.

'You can't have it!' replied Carlton, firmly.

'Then, by heaven, I'll expose you—I'll let out the whole affair of the murder!'

'Thereby putting your own neck into the halter, without endangering me in the least; for you cannot *prove* anything against me, you could not be a witness, and there is no other!'

'Your wife, sir!'

'My wife!' laughed the gambler. 'Are you such an ignorant as not to know that a wife cannot be a witness against her husband? Go ahead, hang yourself, if you will, but you can't hurt me—I *defy* you!'

The maddened clerk knew that this was but too true. He groaned in his misery, and dashed his clenched hand against his burning brow.

'Curse you! Curse you!' he cried, 'you have damned me for ever, and now you glory in it. If I could draw you into the same disgrace and destruction, I'd die a felon's death with joy!'

'Fortunately, you cannot!' said the gambler, with a sneer, 'But dropping that unpleasant subject, do you not intend to retain your situation with S——? You are square with him now, you can turn honest, and I advise you not to play any more. You're bound to lose if you play with sporting men. *Luck* is all gammon, where they're in the game!'

'I shall go there no more—I dare not!' groaned the clerk. 'For God's sake, Carlton, give me five thousand and let me leave the country.'

'I'm sorry, but on my honour I haven't the amount,' replied the gambler. 'As I said before, I can spare five hundred, but I cannot do more!'

'Give it to me!' gasped the clerk. 'I cannot leave the country with it, but I can live upon it for a while, till I can get another place, for I will *not* go back to S.'

The gambler counted out the money.

'There,' said he, handing it to the clerk, 'there is the amount. Now, let me caution you not to bet at faro any more, or you will lose it. You cannot win—I tell you as a friend, you cannot win!'

'As a friend.' God save men from such friends as *Henry Carlton*—God save them from any of his fiendish unprincipled clan!

Meadows took the money, and left the house of the wretch who had ruined him—left it a desperate, remorseful, almost broken-hearted man.

He had been deceived by his betrayer—he had felt the keen sting of base ingratitude from the very man who had driven him to the most fearful of all crimes. He had learned a com-

mon lesson—that to win a man's enmity and hate, you must do him every favour in your power, peril your life, and blast your very soul for him.

CHAPTER XIV.

A MONTH passes away very quickly—doesn't it, reader?—especially if you are happy, or if you have a great deal of work to do, which must be finished in a limited time—for instance, a long tale to write at a day's notice, or some other labour wherein you are expected to do both yourself and your employer justice, without a moment for thought, study, or preparation.

But if you are on a sick-bed, how clogged are the wheels of time, how the minutes drag their 'slow lengths' along.

How long must a month seem to a prisoner who is barred from the glad sunlight, whose very existence is wrapped in a cloud. Yet, if he be condemned to a felon's death, the moments must fly to him—they cannot, will not be tardy enough for his satisfaction.

If one has a note out, payable at thirty days from date, and money is scarce, time seems to work on the 'telegraph' principle; if he has money *due* to him, the contrary old wretch crawls along, as if he was trying not to beat a snail as fast as he could.

For myself (not that I have had notes out, or been so exceedingly happy), my whole life-time has been but as a short and fleeting dream; not one of sunshine and flowers, of music or of gladness, but of storm and tempest—of passion and excitement—wild, and rapid, and lonely as the single cloud, which by itself is borne along amidst the red lightning on the winged gale, where the elements all meet and war with each other.

Forgive this self-allusion, friendly reader; it came all unconsciously out, like the Irishman's joke, and now that it is on paper, it would be a waste of ink to blot it out—the reader who *must* be witty at my expense, will add that 'twas a waste of ink to put it there.

A month has passed in our history—a month since we left one of the purest and most interesting of all our characters, in peril and darkness. Would to God that we might record that she then and there had died, rather than be forced, as we are, to tell a history of misery and shame. We cannot tell it—our pen cannot trace the burning record of foul wrong. We can only hint at vile *drugs*, at the foul and villanous wrong of a wretch, who laid desolate as fair a flower of pure nature as ever was born upon earth.

We must in these vague terms pass over the events of a month, and come to the following scene.

It is laid in the second-story back-chamber of a house up-town—a fine-looking dwelling, in the very centre of an *aristocratic* row of buildings in the most fashionable quarter of the city.

A female is seated on an elegant sofa in this chamber, gazing sadly, but quietly, out of the window, into a little flower-garden which is back of the house. Now and then, through the space, left by an open lot, she looks over into a street beyond and notes the various passengers, and watches the gambols of sundry little children, who are rejoicing in the soft and balmy spring air.

Her cheek is pale and thin, and her eyes are red with continuous weeping, and even yet she is beautiful. A loose *robe de nuit* does not conceal the beauties of her voluptuous form. The very carelessness with which her luxuriant, dark brown curls, fall upon her neck, adds to their rich loveliness, and aids well to contrast the snowy whiteness of her neck.

She was alone in the elegantly furnished room. A guitar was cast down upon one end of the sofa: books lay scattered round; a toilet table, with its many luxuries, occupied a corner of the room.

To judge from appearances, she could not be in want of anything which art could devise, or wealth command.

And this was Isabella Meadows—no longer the pure-souled, high-principled incarnation of living virtue—but a lost and ruined girl. The house where we now exhibit her, was only a private palace of infamy, kept for a select few, by the wealthy hag, in whose den we last left the unfortunate girl.

We will not detail *how* poor Isabella became the tainted and blasted creature we now find her—it is enough—too much that we find her so.

We do not know what her thoughts were, as she sat there and gazed out of the window, but whatever they were, their chain was broken by the opening of the chamber door and the entrance of another of our well-known characters. He came in with a smile,—*he*, the destroyer of that hapless creature, Henry Whitmore, entered with a *smile*.

His arm is yet in a sling, and he is slightly pale from his recent confinement.

And Isabella Meadows turns her eyes toward him, and with a sad smile greets him. Poor thing, she is endeavouring to bear up as well as she can—like the poor girl who was confined in the garret with her, she knows that she is ruined and cannot help herself.

‘Well ’Bella, how d’you get along?’ said the young man, carelessly seating himself by her side, and throwing his arm over her lovely shoulder.

‘Sadly, Harry,’ she replied; ‘I’m very lonesome and unhappy when you are not here!’

'Then, why don't you seek the society of the other girls?'

'Oh, Harry, they are so coarse in their remarks. They are very vulgar and swear at every tenth word, almost!'

'Well, that's nothing. You'll get into it yourself, bye and bye!' replied the unfeeling wretch.

'Oh, God, no, I hope not!' said the girl, tearfully. 'I know I am a lost and ruined creature, but I will not descend to blasphemy—I will not go deeper into sin than I am!'

'That be d——d. You'll soon be like all the rest—for all your preaching and soft talk now!'

'Harry, do not say that. You ought to pity me—for you have made me what I am!'

'There you are again, with your eternal rant about my ruining you, I do wish you'd sometimes change the subject!'

Isabella's eyes flashed for a moment with the fire of anger.

'You do not like to hear the truth, sir!' she said, bitterly. 'You do not like to have me recall your base and unmanly villany.'

'Come, come, Bell, don't let's have another scene!' said the young man, a little more kindly.

'I did not wish to have a scene, as you call it, Henry, but by your unkindness you forced it upon me!'

'Well then, pass it over, I am sorry if I was rough,' said Whitmore.

The kindly tone with which he muttered this, operated in a moment upon Isabella, and while tears came in her eyes, she said,

'Thank you—thank you, Harry, for that kind word. I never expect to be happy, but when you are unkind I grow desperate. Do not drive me to drink, do not force me into the vice and dissipation which I see around me. If I cannot be your *wife*, at least let me be as decent as I can.'

'Certainly, Bell; you are the prettiest woman in town, and I do not wonder that you wish to be exclusive. By the way, I owe some of my friends a supper party, I hope you will not object to be present and do the honours.'

'Oh, Harry, *do* excuse me. Is it not enough that *you* should know my degradation? Do not make me a spectacle to your loose companions.'

'I don't wish to make you a spectacle, Bell; they'd not know you, and a supper party without a woman or two to enliven the scene is a dull affair. You'll really do me a great favour if you'll attend this!'

'You shall have your way, Harry—but I shall be very unhappy when the eyes of strangers are upon me!'

'Oh, nonsense, Bell. You'll not feel it after the first glance, and you are introduced to the company.'

'What note is that in your pocket?' asked Isabella, glancing at a letter which had been carelessly thrust into his vest.

'Only an invitation to a party at a Mr. Shirley's,' replied the young man.

'What, the father of that beautiful young girl I met you walking with one day when we were first acquainted?' asked the girl, flushing up a little.

'Yes, he's a merchant, and very well off!'

'Then you intend going to his party?' continued Isabella.

'Yes—I can't well get off. He's such a *particular* friend!'

A pang of jealousy shot through the unhappy girl's breast. She began to fear that he soon would desert her, even as a mistress, and she shuddered then at the dark and dreadful fate which awaited her—the life which she felt that she could not escape from.

'Have you seen my brother, to-day?' she continued, changing the subject of conversation.

'Yes,' replied Whitmore, 'I saw him, but he was very much ushered with liquor.'

'Alas, I am the cause of it!' said the unhappy girl.

'Oh, no, you are not. He has been dissipated for months.'

'Before I knew you, he was at the gambling table every night. I was introduced to him at a place of that kind!'

'That was what kept him out so late, then?'

'Yes.'

'And my mother—have you seen or heard of her?'

'She is up the river, with some friends, I hear, and is very comfortable, I believe!' replied the deceiver.

'Oh, I'm so glad of that. I expect she's with our relations in Hudson!' said the poor girl, little dreaming where and how her wretched mother really was.

'Does my brother suspect where I am, or how I'm living?' she continued.

'No, not where you are—but he thinks you've turned out, and are living with a Spaniard out of the city. Some one told him so. He has sworn to kill you, if he ever meets you!'

'Three weeks ago, I would have blessed him for the deed!' said she, with a sigh.

'And I would not only have *cursed*, but would have shot him for it!' said Whitmore. 'You were made for a better fate, 'Bell!'

'For a better fate!' she replied, in a sarcastic tone; 'do you call the life I am leading now, a *better* fate? Henry Whitmore, so help me God; if I could recall the hour before I unconsciously took the draught which left me helpless, and in your power, and enabled you to make me what I am, I would destroy my own life, rather than live to be what I am. If I could be pure again, I would rather die than live!'

'Don't talk so, Bell. It's all very well for old maids to preach up such nonsense—but for you, who are so beautiful and so young, it is folly!'

‘Folly or no folly, Harry, it is just as I feel. But I *am* what I am, now, and I cannot help it, only I pray you for my sake, aye, and for your own, not to do anything which will sink me deeper into degradation ! If I ever should get desperate, you would have to beware of me. There is a fiend in me, which must not be aroused !’

‘Poh, Bell ! There’s more of the angel in you, than the devil, a great deal !’

‘No, Harry, all of the angel is *fallen*. I feel what I *am*—I tremble when I think what I may be !’

Reader, with this chapter, we shall close this work. If you would follow the fate of Isabella Meadows, and see what a desperate, crime-hardened being a once pure and virtuous maiden may become, when driven to the very verge of madness, by ruin and wrong ; and if you would see the terrible retribution which followed the crime of Albert Shirley, and read a new and strange history in the fate of Constance, his lovely daughter, you must read

“THE B’HOYS OF NEW YORK,”

a work which will soon follow this, and which will also follow up the strange career of the two CARLTONS, SAM SELDEN, and other characters whom we have not disposed of in this work.

The work we can safely promise will be quite as thrilling, if not more so, than this, for we have wilder incidents, and stranger tales to tell, than the reader yet has seen.

The search of the Abingdons after their child—after great expense and trouble, was at last rewarded with success. They found him at a village school, near Troy, where he had been placed by Genlis, who gave them information of his whereabouts, through an agent whom they paid handsomely for the service.

FINIS.



